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The Secrets of Mind-Control

[2nd Revised Edition]

(*A Master-Piece on the Subject*)

By

SWAMI NARAYANANANDA

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PREFACE

I write this book for the following reasons. Firstly, some Western Yogic-students who have read my already published books, particularly: *"The Primal Power in Man or The Kundalini Shakti"* and *"The Mysteries of Man,, Mind and Mind-Functions"* have expressed the desire that I should write a book on Raja-Yoga based on Rishi Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras in order that they may know the details of meditation on different elements to attain *Siddhis* (Supernatural powers). In making this request these gentlemen seem to minimise and not to appreciate the awaiting dangers, slips and falls they shall have to face on attaining Siddhis without gaining perfect control over the mind and the senses. With the discovery of the atom bomb, the whole world and its civilisation are on the verge of utter destruction, if the so called civilised nations of the world do not mend their ways. Siddhis are even more dangerous than atom bombs. If a man who has not subdued his mind and senses, and is a slave of lust, anger, greed, hatred, etc., comes to possess Siddhis, he is liable to make use of them irrationally and thereby ruin others, ruin the whole world and ruin himself. That is why it has been said that an ordinary man possessing Siddhis is a danger not only to others but to himself also and enhances thereby his own troubles and tribulations along with those of the world. For, to possess Siddhis tentamounts to having all sense-pleasures at one's beck and call and utter ruin awaits one who indulges in the enjoyment of any one of the sense-pleasures recklessly and without restraint. A man with an impure mind and uncontrolled senses can never utilise the Siddhis properly, and being very often misused, they cause incalculable harm to the world. That is why the Scriptures warn us again and again to beware of Siddhis and to shun them as filth. To avoid the inherent temptation and the consequent dangers, the *Rishis* kept the practice of Yoga a guarded secret. These practices were, therefore, taught and transmitted by a Teacher (*Guru*) to a worthy disciple only and not to anyone and everyone. So, my attempt through this book is not to lure people to Yoga with fair promises of Siddhis, but to lead the genuine Sadhakas (spiritual aspirants) to the Ultimate Goal along the right path.

Secondly, when I recall my younger days, particularly the struggles I underwent before finding out a true spiritual guide and in the absence of a proper book to lead me on, step by step, to the Ultimate Goal, I am forced to the conclusion that there must be very many genuine struggling Souls who are finding it difficult to make headway spiritually for want of proper guidance. It is to help such people that I write this book.

Lastly, my effort through this book is not to represent any particular doctrine or dogma, but to deal with the Truth irrespective of any consideration of caste, creed, doctrine, dogma, sex and sect and, as such, I sincerely hope that Truth-seekers will use it to their best advantage.

Rishikesh-Himalayas.
INDIA.
February 2, 1954.

The Author.

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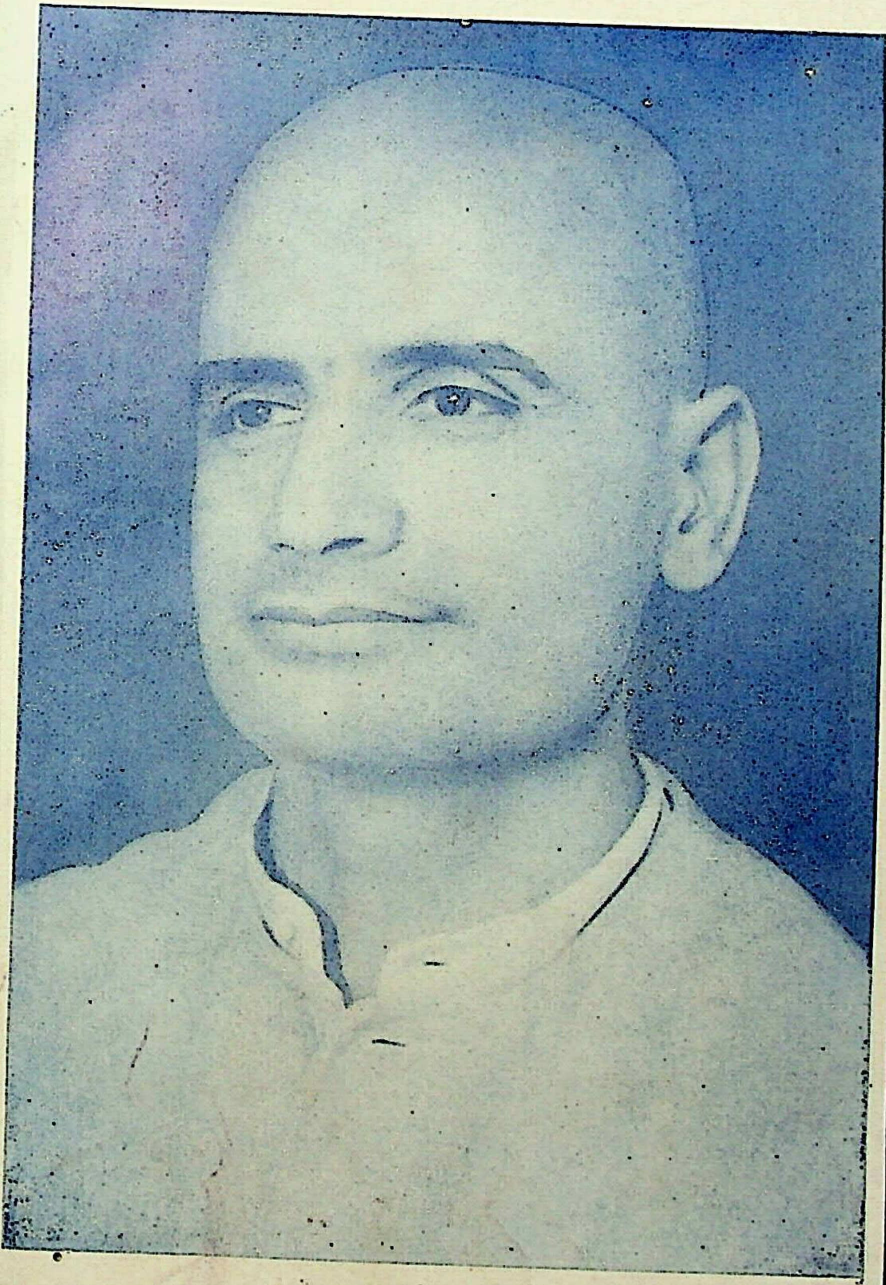
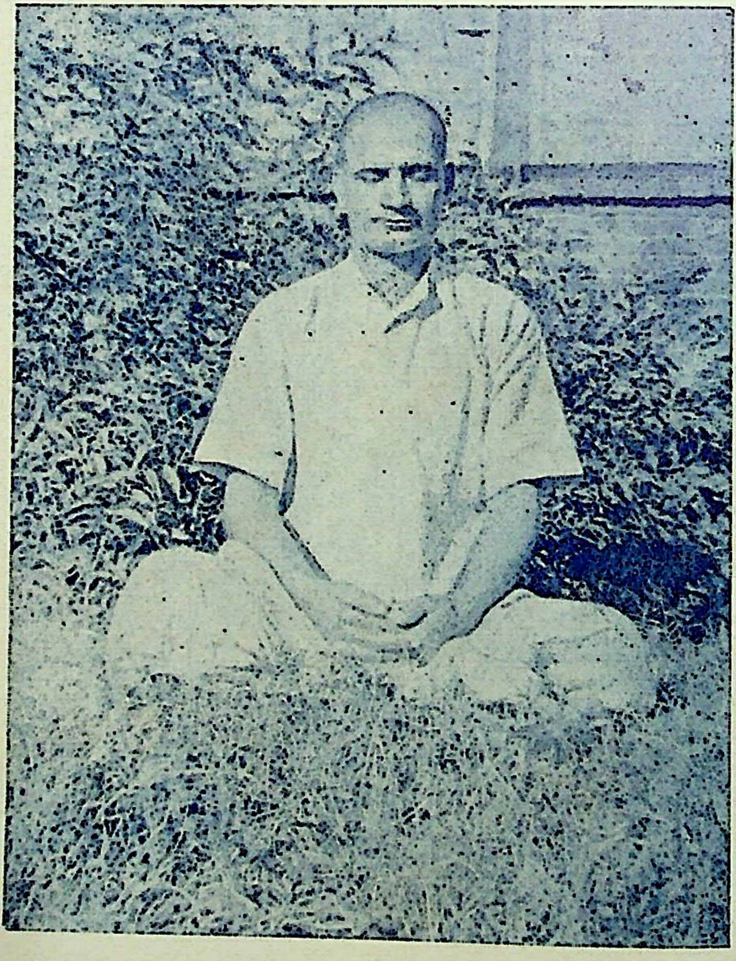
The Secrets of Mind-Control

The Author : at the age of fifty



Swami Narayanananda

The Author



In Deep Meditation

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INTRODUCTION

The Self (Jivatman) is the ruling monarch in the living body and It lives only as a witness. Imagine that you are standing still on the bank of a tank and your reflection is seen on the water surface. Though you are standing still, your reflection trembles with the ripples on the water surface. You do see and witness the movements of the reflection, but are not, in the least, affected by them. Such is the relation between the Jivatman (Self) and the mind, the senses, the body and the sense-objects.

The mind is the chief instrument of the Self and it gets its light and life from the Self. The Self knows the world through the mind. And the mind knows the world through the five gross and the five subtle senses. The ordinary mind without the help of the senses cannot know the world and the senses, in turn, cannot work by themselves and know the world without the mind. It is the mind that works all the senses and gathers experience of all kinds, i.e., it hears and understands a variety of sounds through the ears; it experiences a variety of touches through the skin; it learns a variety of colours and forms through the eyes; it tastes a variety of things through the tongue; and it smells a variety of good and foul smells through the nose. Thus, in the waking-state, the mind gets attached to the different senses and their multifarious objects and works them all without rest or respite. Through these interminate activities, its pristine purity is destroyed and its great powers are dissipated.

As ripples and waves are to a calm water surface of a lake, so are the desires and thoughts to a calm and serene mind. It is the innumerable desires and thoughts that make the mind restless, weak and polluted. It is these desires and thoughts that make it forget the Real Nature of the Jivatman (Self). This out-going tendency of the mind, this restlessness must stop and all desires and thoughts must be checked and controlled, if one wants to gain real peace and bliss and gain true knowledge of the Self. Only when the water surface is clean, calm and undisturbed can one clearly see one's true reflection in it; but when it is ruffled or the water is muddy, one fails to catch one's clear reflection. Likewise, until and unless one's mind is made pure, one-pointed and calm, one cannot get a glimpse of one's true Self.

Freedom, Peace and Bliss are the three ideals that humanity strives for in this world. There is a feverish hunt for them everywhere but very few know how to achieve them in the true sense. A vast majority of beings take to the perverted course and begin courting bondage instead of freedom and misery instead of bliss. Enjoyment of sense-pleasures and Peace stand at antipodes. One nullifies the other. The mind can never gain purity and calmness by getting attached to the senses and their objects.

But the world is mad after sense-pleasures. No day passes but new things are discovered or invented for the gratification of our unruly mind and the senses. In their mad search for peace and happiness, ninety-nine percent of people perish by taking to the wrong path. Many, hoping against hope and without the least idea of a higher Divine life, become mere slaves of their mind and senses. How helpless and miserable such people feel in the hands of their own mind and senses ! How they dance to the tunes of their mind and senses ! These poor, deluded creatures have no proper understanding of the fact that no amount of sense-pleasures can ever make them happy. They do not realize that neither money, nor name, nor fame can ever lead to true happiness. They do not know that real peace and happiness can be gained only by controlling their mind and their senses. Mind-control is impossible without sense-control. The two processes must proceed side by side to achieve the desired end.

There can be no enjoyment without concentration of the mind. The two go together. The mind easily gets concentrated on a thing that one likes, loves and gets attached to. This kind of concentration called automatic-concentration is highly developed in all living things—from human beings down to the insignificant insects and lower lives. A little reflection will prove the truth of this observation. When we love a certain person or thing or get attached to a certain object, our mind constantly lives in that object of love and gets automatically concentrated on that particular object. When we are in the act of enjoying any one of our senses, our mind automatically gets concentrated in that particular sense and its object. This is too evident to need any elaboration. In animals and lower insects also, this phenomenon is ever taking place. When the mating season arrives, animals become mad with lust and their minds get fully absorbed in sex-pleasures with the result that they forget hunger, thirst and even danger and death. The male and female insects stick to one another for hours and days together without any food and very often perish in that state. Automatic-concentration of the mind also takes place in a variety of other acts. Whenever there is interest there is also concentration of the mind. As a matter of fact, interest, happiness and enjoyment go with the concentration of the mind.

Now what is to be desired is the concentration of the mind *at will*. Animals and insects are not capable of it. The transformation of the automatic-concentration of the mind which is instinctive in all creatures, high or low, into voluntary-concentration is no easy task. It requires herculean efforts. It is to be developed slowly but steadily by regular and systematic practices spread over months and even years. And only human beings full of zest, patience and sincerity of purpose can achieve it.

But why should one control the senses and the mind and not enjoy them fully ? God has given us these senses and we must make the most of them. Where is the necessity of controlling them ? A pertinent question, indeed. The answer is—Do enjoy your senses and their objects; only do so as a master and not as a slave. Do not become a helpless slave of the mind and the senses. Let the two work at your bidding. How many men and women can do this ? On the contrary, how very miserable do people become when they are tormented by explosive desires and emotions such as love, lust, greed, anger, hatred, pride, jealousy, sorrow, etc. ? How many people can compose their minds when such emotions manifest themselves in a violent form ? Under the impulse of these strong desires and emotions what heinous acts are not being everyday perpetrated ? What sins are not being committed in the name of revenge and for the satisfaction of worldly desires and emotional feelings ? And is not incalculable injury being caused to the world and humanity at large everyday through numerous and multifarious wicked desires, thoughts and acts ? It is a gloomy picture, indeed, resulting from the mad and unscrupulous enjoyment of the senses as their slaves. Is not then an exercise of control over the mind and the senses desirable ? How can mastery over the mind and the senses be otherwise attained? There is no other way for the attainment of true and everlasting happiness. Try to restrain your mind and keep it free from desires and thoughts even for a few minutes. It will then be found how very restless it is and what innumerable bubbling desires and thoughts surge within it. Your utter helplessness in this respect will also become apparent.

It is the fashion with the worldly-minded people and the so-called leaders to talk much nonsense and assume the role of guides of peoples and nations; but they sadly lack control over the mind and the senses. When they themselves are slaves of the mind and the senses they can never guide others along the right path. It is simply absurd to expect this of them. Their behaviour is like a beggar's attempt in inviting hundreds of people for alms-giving. It is for lack of proper guidance and true leadership that so much of misery is rampant in the world. Truly speaking it is due to lack of control over the mind and the senses by men and women and particularly by leaders. If human beings had been men and women of character and if all leaders had been persons with perfect mastery over the mind and the senses, there would not have been so much of troubles and tribulations in this world.

There is no higher gain to a man than control over his senses and the mind. It is the richest treasure one can aspire to. Possession of fabulous wealth even cannot make a man happy if he remains a mere puppet in the hands of his mind and senses. And, on the contrary, a man who can exercise control over his own mind and senses, remains peaceful and happy even without possessing a single penny. A perfect man with perfect control over his mind and senses can forget everything, can drive away all desires, thoughts or emotions at any time *at will* and can make his mind free of everything. Such a man enjoys eternal peace and bliss, moves about fearlessly with a strong mind and gains longevity of life. For, by constant appearing of violent emotions a man becomes a prey to various kinds of mental and neurotic diseases. When a violent emotion appears in the mind it produces chemical changes in the body, brings on convulsions and destroys millions of blood corpuscles. Where such strong emotions appear every now and then, man suffers from a variety of diseases resulting in premature decay and even death.

Real freedom, peace, strength and bliss can be had only through mind-control. Mind–control also ensures longevity of life. It increases the power of memory, and makes the intellect sharp. It is the secret of success in any sphere of life and learning. Wherever there is real greatness, wherever there is extraordinary display of intellect, there, at the back of it, is mind-control. Enjoyment of sense-pleasures is not conducive to real happiness. If that were otherwise, animals would be far superior to human beings. For, the animals and the lower creatures know only to eat, drink, beget, and sleep. They have no higher aim in life and no responsibilities. If man takes recourse to this kind of life, a life of sense-pleasures, he would be no better than an animal. Truly speaking, he would be worse off. Unlike man, wild animals rarely fall sick, they enjoy robust health with great enduring power. But how very helpless man really is ! Therefore, for spiritual or material growth and prosperity and for the enjoyment of real peace and happiness, control over the senses and the mind is not only desirable but also essential.

Finally, the mind is a very subtle thing. It has no form and no colour of its own. It takes the colour and form of the objects of our desires and thoughts. We are what our thoughts have made us. As we think, so we become. If one constantly thinks of sense-pleasures and other wicked things one is doomed to eternal perdition. On the contrary, if one acts rightly, cherishes good, noble and elevating desires and thoughts, one gains in moral stature and enjoys real peace and bliss. As a matter of fact, the world is nothing but a projection of our own mind. Our weal or woe, pleasure or pain and everything else depends upon our mind. Through proper training and careful control of the mind one can enjoy a heaven of bliss in this very life and in this very world. Imagine a man suffering from severe headache or colic pain. In the waking-state the pain is intolerable and the man is restless and even cries aloud. If he goes to sleep with or without the administration of some medicine, he forgets the pain and even his body and his surroundings. On waking up he feels the pain once again if it persists. What becomes of his body and the severe pain during sleep ? Why did he not feel it in sleep ? This is because, in sleep, he dissociates his mind from his body and the painful part of it. In sleep, the mind automatically merges in the Self which is in the spiritual heart-centre (on the rightside of the chest) and that is why one is unaware of the body during sleep. In the waking-state, the mind remains in and works from the brain-centre and gets connected with the body and the senses. Even in the waking-state, if one knows how to control the mind and how to dissociate it from the physical body and the senses at will, one can enjoy perfect peace and bliss. Grips of severe pain, deepest sorrow, heavy losses and every other kind of cruel affliction cannot disturb or unnerve such a man. Hence control over the mind and the senses helps one to gain immensely in life. There is no comparison what-so-ever between the eternal Bliss that results from mind-control and the evanescent sensuous-pleasure obtained from sense-enjoyments.

To enjoy real Peace and Bliss, one must control the mind, one must exercise control over all the senses and to control the senses one must strictly observe the code of moral conduct and celibacy and pay careful attention to one's food, drink, residence and society. Certain Asanas (postures) and Pranayamas also help in voluntary-concentration. And how meditation and concentration should be practised and how Mantras and symbols help concentration are all dealt with thoroughly in the chapters that follow.

2

MORAL CODE OF CONDUCT

Truthfulness, non-killing, non-injury, chastity, forbearance, non-stealing, contentment, purity, unselfishness, generosity, charity, service unto the sick, helpless and the poor and unto one's elders and unto one's teacher, obedience, control of speech, loving all living creatures, and keeping the mind free from the clutches of lust, anger, greed, infatuation, pride, hatred, etc., comprise the code of moral or ethical conduct. As a matter of fact, every desire, thought and act that brings good to oneself and to others also is moral. The aim and end of ethics or morality is to make man pure, holy, peaceful and happy. Moral code is the very foundation upon which rests the entire structure of religion, government and civilization. A dishonest, wicked or immoral man cannot make headway in religion. All religions, great and small, preach the same doctrine of purity, holiness and chastity. All the great men of religion of all times and climes have lived pure and perfect lives and have preached the same gospel of truth, non–violence and service. All governments have one and the same aim to make their subjects good, pure, peaceful, prosperous and happy. The aim of civilization itself is also the same—to make man gentle, kind, loving, chaste, pure, prosperous, peaceful and happy. Thus in ethics lies the key to human progress and prosperity and world peace and happiness.

If all men were good, kind and merciful; if every one knew how to respect and regard another's wealth, property, wife and daughters; and if every one was truthful, chaste and unselfish, where was the necessity for governments, kings, presidents, dictators or prime ministers ? If all men and women were morally strong and perfect, where was the necessity for law-courts, judges, magistrates, lawyers, policemen and jails ? If all nations were good and considerate and if their kings, dictators, presidents, or prime ministers were men and women of character, where was the necessity for soldiers, bombers, fighters and atom and H-bombs ? Where do the so-called civilized nations and the so-called civilized people really stand ? With all the bragging and boasting of their civilization, material progress and great discoveries and inventions, have they really advanced in moral stature ? As we see it, the nations of today have made no real progress. They have only invented instruments for their own destruction. It is just like young children playing with sharp razor-blades. The people of today are extremely selfish and sensual. All their inventions are meant for the gratification of their physical senses. They have forgotten the aim and end of life. They are groping for peace and happiness in sense-enjoyments—instead of finding them in self-control.

And naturally, religion has degenerated. Many of the religious leaders and priests have become mere propagandists. They hanker after name and fame. They want to increase the number of their followers without the least concern for their moral growth. They resort to all sorts of nefarious ways and become selfish and unsympathetic. These priests and leaders mislead their followers and turn them bigots. A crow loves its young ones, and gladly risks its own life to save theirs when the latter are in danger; but the same crow mercilessly tears into pieces the young ones of other birds, however beautiful they may be. Likewise, these bigoted priests and their followers bear the least sympathy and toleration for the followers of other sects however good and noble they may be. They have forgotten the real aim and object of religion. They have neglected the message of their founders. It is only due to the want of moral growth of the people and lack of morality in their conduct that there is so much of bloodshed in this world in the name of God and religion. If all the different religious sects pay particular attention to morality, and their priests and followers make themselves perfect morally-the whole world can be changed into a veritable heaven. But alas ! though the different religions pursue the same aim and ideal and have one and the same mission to fulfil, they have all very badly missed the one guiding principle of life—the necessity of strictly following the code of moral conduct for human welfare, peace and prosperity.

The same is true of the different governments in the world. As has already been said, the aim of a government is to safeguard the rights and property of its people and to make them gentle, civilized, peaceful, progressive and happy. To gain these ends they have created various departments. But with all the different departments, laws and courts, are the subjects of these governments really happy? Are they peaceful? No. There is so much discontenment everywhere. People are longing for peace and happiness that is nowhere. It has become a fashion with some people of name and fame to found international peace organizations, world religious organizations, etc. Everyday some new organization styled as world organization, is springing up somewhere. In spite of these numerous peace movements and organizations world-peace and world–happiness are a mere dream with a third world war almost threatening. If, we closely search for the causes of the failures of these organizations, it will be found that the founders and leaders of these organizations are not men of character. They have not established themselves in morality. They have not subdued their minds and the senses. Their actions are based on selfish motives, viz., the great hidden desire for name and fame. People with such a bent of mind are incapable of doing real service to the people and to the world. A spiritual aspirant trying to perfect himself in mind-control does renounce wealth, comforts, etc., after some hard struggle; but the desire for name and fame still clings to him very stubbornly. This desire is really the most difficult to subdue and renounce and is possible only through a very close study of the mind, controlling and mending it and putting it constantly on the right path. Without the eradication of this all-pervading hidden desire no one can do real service of any kind. In fact, to become a true leader is a really tough job. For, one who is a slave of his mind and senses, who is motivated by the desire for name and fame and is selfish can never lead others. Under such leadership, the world cannot but be full of discontentment and misery. What the world truly needs are leaders of the right calibre.

If the kings, presidents or dictators of the different countries along with their leading statesmen had been men and women of character and morally strong and perfect, they would have been able to do immense good to the whole world. The world would then have enjoyed perfect peace, happiness and prosperity. But, when these very top-ranking men fall a prey to hatred, jealousy, dishonesty and immorality, etc., how much injury to the world they do cause ! When a sly, intelligent and unscrupulous man with the resources of a vast empire at his disposal and behest turns into a cunning human brute, he can do incalculable harm to the world and cause havoc beyond imagination. A wild, and ferocious animal with all its naked cruelity can destroy only a few helpless animals, whereas an intelligent, powerful but unprincipled leader swayed by ego or his country's interest and tormented by jealousy, greed and malice can destroy the peace of the whole world and make a hell of earth. Statesmanship is now a cloak for hypocrisy, self-seeking and double-dealing to the detriment of the world. We have already witnessed two great and terrible world wars within a short span of twenty years. Just see what the so-called great nations did in these two great conflagrations. With the aid of science they invented dreadful weapons, aeroplanes, tanks, bombs and even atom-bombs and used them freely not only on fighting men but also on helpless civilians and killed thousands of helpless aged men and women, sick patients, pregnant women, virgins, boys, girls and babies. They ruined many cities and made it horrible to live not only in the fighting areas but in other parts of the world as well. And none repented for the havoc and destruction caused. On the contrary, some of them even prided themselves on the destruction nefariously brought about and the humiliation heaped on their foes by means fair or foul. Such is the mentality of the top-leading men of the twentieth century. This kind of vulgar warfare, with the killing of innocent aged people, pregnant women, virgins and children in cold-blood and the destruction of their hearths and homes and property unawares was unknown in old times, particularly in India. In days long gone by in India, the fighting armies met each other in pitched battles, the defeated army accepted its defeat and the conqured king generally became a vassal and there ended the fight. The victorious army seldom molested the conquered subjects; instead it treated them kindly and humanly. Compared to that, what we have seen in recent war-fares is nothing short of barbarism. A warrior in ancient India would never use his weapon against a woman or a child. A chivalrous Kshatriya would rather die than perpetrate such a heinous and shameful act.

It will not be out of place to take a leaf out of the recent history of India to show what diplomacy and statesmanship is capable of in modern times. It may make world leaders pause and reflect on their responsibilities and duties and make them ask themselves "whither ?"

It is freely given out that the British rule brought about amity and concord amongst the many warring creeds in India. True that only thirty years back these different communities lived happily side by side as members of a single family. Then came the open demand for Swarajya, i.e., freedom. Different communities joined hands in making this demand. The first great world war broke out in 1914, and British statesmen dragged India into war with fair promises of Swarajya after the war had been won. The war came to an end in the year 1918 and India was disillusioned; for instead of getting Swarajya, She got the Rowlett Act (according to which any Indian could be arrested on suspicion and clapped into jail indefinitely without trial) as a reward for her great sacrifices in men, money and material. When the people of the Punjab irrespective of caste, creed, sex and age gathered together peacefully in the Jalianwala-Bagh at Amritsar to protest against this injustice, many were mercilessly done to death by gunshots, and those who survived were made to crawl on all fours along a street as if they were so many animals. In utter consternation the people ran helter-shelter and many found a watery grave in a well nearby as the ruthless and indiscriminate shooting continued. Instead of punishing the culprits, the British Government condoned their inhuman lapse as "an error of judgement", pardoned them and safely transported them to England. This brought Gandhiji into the field and he started the non-cooperation movement to which all the different communities of India responded most enthusiastically. British statesmanship then hit upon the policy of "divide and rule" in self-interest; and followed it unscrupulously. The result was marvellous. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and others began to fly at the face of one another. The fanatic and illiterate masses entirely ignorant of Dharma, depended fully on their priests and preceptors for guidance and the British imperialists were not slow in fanning the flame of hatred in dubious and devious ways. Communal riots now darkened the atmosphere of India and the Muslims were bolstered up against the general demand for freedom. In the great heroic fight for freedom, many great Indians - Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs (May their Souls rest in Eternal Peace!) lay down their lives most cheerfully. Many died in jails and many suffered from inhuman treatment and incurable diseases. But the fight for freedom went on unabated and caused no little headache to the rulers.

Now broke out the second great world war in 1939. Again, in spite of India's unwillingness to take part in European conflicts, She was forced to send her men and material and contribute in money. But soon after this war came to an end in 1945, the situation so developed that British imperialism was forced to abdicate and India became a free country. But before leaving India, responsible British officers so manipulated matters that they succeeded in partitioning the country into Hindustan and Pakistan. Mahatma Gandhi stubbornly stood against this division of India. But genuinely suspicions that even greater evils might befall the country if the British stayed on any longer, Indian leaders agreed to the dismemberment of their country most reluctantly. This was in 1947.

Before the British quitted the shores of India, they were careful enough to take all precautions for the safety of all their nationals; but they sadly neglected (and it is alleged, purposely) to take any measures to safeguard the lives and property of minorities in the two newly-created states. It is also being freely alleged that responsible British officers took sides and abetted the holocaust that followed their withdrawal. Be that as it may, the most shameful and inhuman atrocities that were perpetrated and the cold-blooded murders and massacres that were committed and arson, loot, abductions and rapes that took place are too disgraceful and blood-curdling to be recorded in detail. Communal fanaticism reigned supreme on both sides of the border till Mahatma Gandhi raised his clarion call and made the people of India see the error of their ways. Had it not been for him, the forty million Muslims in Hindustan would have been wiped out of existence as millions of Hindus and Sikhs in Pakistan had already been butchered to death. Gandhiji succeeded in the herculean task that he had set before himself but he had to pay dearly for it with his life.

The gruesome and tragic events recorded above show to what lengths unscrupulous leaders and statesmen are prepared to go to satisfy their personal or national interests, goaded by malice and ill-will towards opponents and in utter disregard of all canons of ethics and morality. And truly, "man is worse than an animal when he is an animal".

Lastly, we come to education and civilization. The modern man calls himself educated and civilised. He ranks his ancestors as barbarions, for he thinks that he has advanced in science and has discovered so many other things. But let us see where he stands actually. True, that huge cities with millions of people living side by side have been founded. True, that fine tarred roads have been made and railway trains, trams, motor cars and even aeroplanes have been invented and time and distance have been conquered. With the discovery of telegraph, telephone and wireless, one can communicate with others in all parts of the globe. In medical science valuable discoveries have been made and the span of average human life increased. In agriculture produce has been improved and multiplied. Giant plants and mills have been set up every where to supply man with the finest textiles, cutlery and other articles of daily use. Side by side have been invented the most destructive weapons like machine guns, long range guns, tanks and bombs of various kinds culminating in atom-bombs, H-bombs and the like. But with all these, is the modern man really happy ? In search of happiness he has almost spent himself but real happiness is as far distant as ever. No amount of external enjoyments can make a man really happy. This is why in ancient India, even the mighty emperors used to renounce their crowns in search of true and ever lasting bliss. Real bliss lies in controlling one's mind and the senses and in coming face to face with the Ultimate Reality. But the modern man has forgotten this totally and has become a slave of his senses. A modern king or emperor will abdicate his throne for the sake of a woman, but he can never think of taking this step in pursuit of Eternal peace and happiness. Swindling, deceit, selfishness, falsehood, back'biting, lying, debauchery, dishonesty, black-marketing, etc., are now the common traits of an average worldly man or woman. "Eat, drink and be merry" is his slogan. He has no higher aim in life except sense-enjoyments. To him the ethical code is a sealed book. In many cases he is even worse than wild animals. Modern comforts have made him delicate. He has lost the power of endurance and self-control. He cannot with-stand hardships and disease. He does eat well, drink well, live well and wear well, but slave of his mind and senses as he is, he is very unhappy in spite of material comforts. As has been said, the true aim of education or civilization is to make man pure, peaceful, gentle, prosperous and happy and if education or civilization fails to bring this about and, on the contrary, makes him sinful, sensual, selfish, immoral and unhappy, it must be considered defective and false. True education and civilization must enable a man to discriminate between good and evil and endow him with the will and power to choose and pursue the truth unmindful of all considerations.

In short, morality and ethics must be the very basis of human conduct from which will follow, as night the day, world-peace and human happiness and prosperity. Nations of the world should, therefore, pay particular attention to character-building in schools and colleges and lay down a common code of moral conduct which must be strictly adhered to. This is the easiest and the most efficacious method of reformation so that the coming generations of men and women are properly trained, to mend the defects which modern man has wrongly imbibed and complacently adores.

3

BRAHMACHARYA (CELIBACY)

[Brahmacharya or celibacy has been scientifically and elaborately dealt with in my first book, viz., "THE WAY TO PEACE, POWER AND LONG LIFE". *Here I shall deal only with the necessity of Brahmacharya. Those who are interested in the subject and desire guidance will do well to refer to that book.]*

Brahmacharya is an important item in the code of ethical conduct. It is the most vital and the most efficacious instrument of mind-control. In fact, to think of mind-control without it is impossible. How sadly it is being neglected these days is the most distressing feature of modern life. If one tells lies and even commits a murder secretly, one may escape punishment till one is detected. But one cannot escape the loss of one's physical and mental energy which follows almost immediately if one commits adultery or self-abuse even covertly.

For those who aspire to attain perfection in Yoga and those who wish to gain higher concentration of the mind, observance of strict Brahmacharya is a necessity. Mind-control and control of sex-energy go together. Of all sense-enjoyments, sex-enjoyment is the most potent and powerful in an adult. Every sexual-enjoyment brings chaos in the system and there is an enormous loss of energy physically and mentally. It is the unity between Shiva and Shakti in their gross form. This very unity between them in their causal state is the bliss of Samadhi. Sex-energy is the very sap of the body and in order to gain purity and vigour of the mind and heart, obtain gigantic will-power, and make the mind pure, subtle and one-pointed, this energy must be harnessed and converted into the great mind-power called "Ojas Shakti". Until and unless a man conserves this energy he cannot gain perfect concentration of the mind. Greatness and extraordinary display of power are only possible when, consciously or unconsciously, one succeeds in observing strict celibacy.

The loss sustained by every sexual-enjoyment is irreparable. The energy wasted in a single coition is equal to that spent in twenty-four hours of hard mental work and seventytwo hours of hard physical labour. Thus, a man or woman who is a slave of lust can neither enjoy concentration nor peace of mind. He or she suffers from fickle-mindedness, is never straightforward and is generally a coward. But he who establishes himself in Brahmacharya in thought, word and deed shines like the midday sun, and displays great powers. Every word and every act of such a man has a great meaning and a great effect. Brahmacharis are really the people, who are the very salt of the earth.

Excess in loss of sex-energy produces a variety of diseases and is the cause of premature decay and death. The more this energy is wasted, the shorter becomes the duration of life. But a strict observance of Brahmacharya enables one to enjoy perfect mental and physical health and ensures longevity of life. Many of the diseases which take a long time to cure in ordinary people, are easily and quickly cured in a Brahmachari. Every physical and mental act, such as, eating, drinking, walking, speaking, thinking, etc., entails loss, more or less, of "Ojas Shakti" (great mental–power); but of all the physical and mental actions, that which drains the body of "Ojas Shakti" the most, is sexual-enjoyment. Loss of this Shakti means shortening of one's life and its preservation, longevity.

Thus, for an all-round happy and healthy growth of the body and the mind, preservation of sex-energy and its conversion into "Ojas Shakti" are absolutely necessary. When the sex-energy is not conserved and protected, but is wasted instead, one loses physical and mental vigour and moral stamina. Such a person generally misses the true aim and end of life and becomes very miserable. Those who seek progress, prosperity and happiness and wish to attain concentration of the mind, cannot but observe perfect Brahmacharya. Without it nothing good and nothing great can ever be achieved. For, a sexual life dissipates the powers of the mind and the body and renders one incapable of hard, sustained work for spiritual and moral growth. To know, to understand, and to grasp the most abstruse and subtle problems and forces of the universe, a strong, collected mind with a very keen and sharp intellect, and an adamantine will-power are absolutely necessary. And to gain these qualities, observance of perfect Brahmacharya is the only royal road.

If one observes perfect Brahmacharya in thought, word and deed continuously without

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break for twelve years, one develops the subtle, hidden powers of the mind and the senses. Automatically one also gains the purity and one-pointedness of the mind. It is then alone that the sixth sense is gained and one is enabled easily to understand and follow the most abstruse truths of religion which otherwise elude one's intellect. Every individual aspires after strength, wants to retain youth, vigour and beauty and hankers after freedom. Perfect Brahmacharya helps one to gain all these things easily. It also helps to destroy ills, evils and weaknesses of all kinds. Those who observe Brahmacharya acquire the power to guard themselves and their possessions from all harms and evils. Hundreds of Yogis and Truth-seekers, in spite of their many good qualities, come to grief for loss of Brahmacharya. For, sexual union forges the fetters of the heart for man and woman and from this proceeds all delusion based on ego-instinct and craving for possessions. Lust and gold, this is Samsara (the world). And this is verily the hell. Attachment to these brings bondage and misery. Lust is the prime cause of gold and gold, in turn, is the cause of bondage, and of untold miseries. Brahmacharya is a great boon to a poor man or woman, the food value of whose nourishment is so low. A rich man who takes nutritious food and drink escapes the danger of a sexual-life to some extent, whereas it injures a poor man grievously. His loss in every coition is irreparable and the tax upon his mental and physical health exorbitant. The life of such people cannot but be far removed from Dharma (righteousness). These people are generally weak, timid and stupid and lead a degraded and degenerate life. If these poor men and women only learn the great value and necessity of Brahmacharya and conform their lives thereto, they will be better fitted to fight the ills of poverty and make a success of their lives in spite of their uncongenial circumstances.

Perfect Brahmacharya bestows enormous physical and mental strength, gigantic will-power, courage, power of resistance, and character. No worldly power can withstand the power of the Spirit. No worldly power can compete with spiritual power. A man who observes strict Brahmacharya establishes himself easily in the Spirit, lives in the power of the Self, and moves in the glory of the Spirit. If a country or nation abounds with such great men and women, it is bound to prosper in every way. For world peace, freedom, collective and individual prosperity, the observance of perfect Brahmacharya is simply an absolute necessity.

Fear, anger, lust, hatred, etc., are the forerunners of disease and the messengers of death. These violent emotions cause disorder in the system. The vicious mental states and explosive passions cause chemical changes in the brain and the body, and poison cell-life. There is no fire like that of lust. Fire burns a man here only, but the fire of lust burns him here and hereafter also. Of all the evils in the world, carnality is the most painful and dangerous. A person struck by lust becomes helpless, loses his charm and lustre and is reduced to wretchedness and agony. Sexual-enjoyment causes convulsions in the body and the mind and throws them out of gear and into utter chaos. Every violent passion kills millions and millions of red corpuscles every time it appears in the system. If such emotions take place in the body everyday, the effect is terrible disease, premature decay and death. So, even for the enjoyment of good mental and physical health and long life, it is absolutley necessary to observe strict Brahmacharya. If knowledge is acquired while practising Brahmacharya it will enable one to distinguish right from wrong, light one's way to heaven, and befriend one under all circumstances. It will also serve as society in solitude, companion in loneliness, guide in happiness and the sustainer of one's misery, the ornament amongst friends and the armour against one's enemies.

In leading a sexual life, the vast majority of human beings are reckless in sharp contrast to the animals in general. It would be well for them to learn a lesson from their way of life. Animals, birds, reptiles and even the most insignificant insects have a very regulated sexual life. The males and the females of all the many species have no mating apart from the season. But man, with all his boast of intelligence and common sense is much worse in this respect. How very shameful it is !

To sum up, to gain real intuition one must observe strict Brahmacharya. Without it, one can never attain Samadhi and gain Brahma-Jnana (knowledge of the Self). To bring into action the enormous hidden and creative powers of the mind, the observance of Brahmacharya is essential. One must first observe it in deed and then in word and thought. It is a herculean task, no doubt, but given the will, patience and perseverance success is sure to come. One must take all necessary precautions and observe all rules and regulations prescribed for a Brahmachari strictly in the initial stages. But when perfection is attained there will be no fear of a fall and one can move freely, if necessary, among young and beautiful persons of one's opposite sex. Married people can just get a glimpse of the strength of their will-power and their power of concentration as well as of the state of their physical health when they observe Brahmacharya. In contrast to that they can also see what becomes of these things when they take recourse to reckless sex-enjoyment. Truly speaking, there is no greater loss to a man than a sexual-life, and there is no greater gain to him than a life of self-discipline and self-control.

4

FOOD AND DRINK

Food and drink play a very important part in mind-control. With unwholesome food and a heavy stomach one cannot practise meditation and gain concentration of the mind. Besides, a man who is a slave of his tongue or palate is also a slave of lust. For, there is a very close connection between the tongue and the genital organ. A man keen on observing perfect Brahmacharya, must exercise full control over his food and drink. Many sects and people have very crude ideas about food and drink. Some prescribe strict vegetarian diet, while others have no objection to non-vegetarian food. What generally happens is that, if the founder of a particular sect is a vegetarian he extols vegetarian diet and commands his followers to be strict vegetarians. If, however, he happens to be a non-vegetarian himself he allows his followers to eat fish, meat and the like. Such views, however, are rather one-sided and narrow. It is certainly neither possible nor advisable to prescribe one and the same kind of food for all men in different climes. In deciding what food and drink should be taken we must use our common sense. We must take into consideration the time, clime, constitutional agreement and local availability. Nature has Her own plan concerning this. The fauna and flora of different places and different seasons differ and the people who make use of the local easily available articles of food and drink, remain healthy and feel happy.

In India, some narrow-minded and bigoted people have much hatred for non-vegetarian diet. The very idea of meat-eating is galling to them and puts them off their moorings. They can never tolerate meat-eating. In this connection we would like to mention a little incident. Ten years back while the author was living at Haridwar, a certain *Vaish* gentleman (i. e., belonging to the merchant class), who was a strict vegetarian put the following question to his Guru (spiritual teacher): "Sir, a man is a strict vegetarian, but he commits adultery, tells lies, indulges in black-marketing and commits all sorts of evils. Another man is a meat-eater, but he is kind, gentle, chaste, pure and charitable. He commits no adultery and tells no lies. Out of these two men, who is the better and nearer to God ?" The Guru gave the following answer: "Dear me, in my opinion, both of the men are sinners but the man who eats meat is the worse sinner." Does not such an answer betray the height of stupidity ? And many such awfully stupid persons posing as religious guides are leading some thousands of people along erroneous path. It is such people and their followers that engender quarrels and cause blood-shed under the garb of religion and in the name of God.

How unreasonable are these fanatics ? They cannot imagine and fail to understand the difficulties of people living in different parts of the world. According to these people, the non-vegetarians are all irreligious. But is it true ? Can man live without God and religion ? As a matter of fact man cannot do so. So long as he has a living body and the idea of disease and death, man cannot discard God and religion. Truly speaking, there are no atheists in this world in the real sense of the term. Those who deny the existence of God or refuse to believe in Him talk of "Nature, Force, Spirit", etc., in the same light. And the heart of man feels that there is a Supreme Being Who guides his steps and to Whom he must bend his knees.

Take for example, the case of the people living in extreme climates, like the North and South poles of the earth or in Tibet and even in East Bengal (Pakistan). Near the north and South poles the inhabitants cannot grow any kind of corn or vegetable—and their staple food is the flesh and oil of seal (a kind of fish). In Tibet, the people live at a very high altitude. No corn grows there except in the low lying valleys and it is too insufficient to support the whole land. People import corn to some extent either from India or from China and their main food is fried wheat powder *(Chattu)*, tea and meat; for they can rear sheep, goats and yaks on the small grass during the rainy season. In East Bengal, whole fields are under water during the rainy season. As such, they cannot grow any vegetable during that season. Though imported vegetables are available, they are too dear to be purchased by men of ordinary means. But they can get plenty of fish at a very low price; they can even catch plenty of them without much effort. Instances like these can be multiplied but these few should suffice our purpose. Necessity is the mother of invention. In all these cases, if the people are to live, they must utilize the easily available articles of food and drink in their region. There is no other way. If the bigots had their way, they would label all meat-eaters as heretics and unfit for religious practices and divine favour and grace.

Again, let us cast a glance at the dim past of our land. In olden times the Aryan Hindu Rishis (Seers) were non-vegetarians. They used to take even beef and the heady drink "*Soma*". Meat and *Soma* are said to be the favourite food and drink of gods. The Rishis used to offer meat and *Soma* profusely to gods in worship and during sacrifices. Milch cows were forbidden to be killed, no doubt, but bulls, calves and barren cows were allowed to be killed and eaten. Instances from the Vedas support this statement. Yajur Veda, Satpath Brahmana, Brihatarunyaka Upanishad, Adhyaya 6th, 4th Brahmana, 18th verse runs thus: – "He who wishes for the birth of such a son as would be a reputed scholar, frequenting the assemblies and speaking delightful words, and as would study all the four Vedas and attain the full term of life, should have rice cooked with the meat of a vigorous bull or one more advanced in years and he and his wife should eat it with clarified butter. Then he would be able to beget such a son." Even the old meat-eating habits of the people are still to be found in many parts of India, where the Brahmins and the other three castes take fish and meat freely, as in Bengal, Assam, Orissa, Kashmir and parts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.

Again, take the case of the great spiritual and moral giants, the great law-givers and the founders of great religions of the world. These rare great men whom the people of the whole world follow and worship as God–Incarnates or God-sent men, whose compassion for all living things know no bounds, in whom ignorance had no place and who saw their own Self in each and everything,—all these great Prophets sprang from the non-vegetarian class. Manu, Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Mahavira, Zoroaster, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, Nanak, Leotose, Sinto and RamaKrishna were all non-vegetarians. If religion forbids fish and meat-eating as sin and limits its followers to vegetable diet alone, were these great men non-religious ? Can sin beget virtue ? Can anyone dare deny the highest spiritual attainments of these great men ? If the high and sublime spiritual attainments of these great men are to be denied, what will become of all the religions of the world ?

The *Tantriks* use fish, meat and wine freely in their worship and so do the Buddhistic *Tantriks* also. Even Lord Buddha who was prepared to give his own life for the sake of a lamb about to be sacrificed and who preached against animal sacrifice has permitted his followers to take fish and meat under the following conditions. *Vinaya-Pitak*-chapter 6-8, page 245: Lord Buddha with his followers attends a dinner given by the King Singa Senapathy. Therein in reply to a querry on meat eating, Lord Buddha says thus—"Oh, Bhikkhus, you should not eat any fish or meat which has been specially prepared for your dinner. Any body eating such a thing will be guilty of the sin called "*Dukkat.*" But I order that you may eat such fish and meat as, you are sure, has not been killed for you."

Jainism stands on the bed-rock of Ahimsa (non-killing or non-injury). No religion has given so much importance to Ahimsa as Jainism has done. Yet, when it deals with ethical-code of conduct for householders, it confronts the difficulty and prescribes for them a milder form of Ahimsa. Jaina Scripture says that any action calculated to do injury to any living being is violence. Speaking harsh words so as to injure the feelings of others is violence of speech. Thinking ill of others or contemplation of injury is mental violence. For a householder, it is not possible to avoid all these kinds of injury in their entirity and therefore he is recommended to discharge his worldly responsibilities with the minimum injury to others. To give practical guidance in this matter, injury to others has been classified under four heads; viz., 1. accidental, 2. occupational, 3. protective, & 4. intentional. 1. Injury to small living things unavoidable in building a house, cooking a meal, grinding flour, walking, bathing and other similar acts of daily life comes under the first head. 2. Injury caused by a soldier in fighting and killing the enemy or a farmer tilling the land and others carrying on other occupational operations involving injury to living beings, belongs to the second kind. 3. Injury caused by one in protecting oneself, one's wife, children and others from the attacks of other human beings or wild animals comes under the third head. 4. Injuring or killing animals and other lower life simply for the sake of injuring or killing them belongs to the fourth kind. The householders are ordained to abstain completely from the fourth kind of injury and to minimize to the greatest extent possible injuries of the other three kinds. Hence, the vow of *Ahimsa* of a householder is called *Anuvrata* (minor vow).

In India no book is so popular as Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita and Lord Krishna's name is a by-word in every home. Every sect quotes the Gita as an authority in support of its views. But the very advent of Gita was due to Arjuna's refusal to fight a rightful war and kill his own grandfather (*Pitamaha*), *Guru* (teacher) and other kith and kin. According to the bigots, Arjuna was right in refusing to fight the rightful war. But Lord Krishna, out of mere compassion and love for *Arjuna*, preached to him the profoundest knowledge in eighteen chapters, destroyed his ignorance and made him fight the dreadful battle of *Kurukshetra*. How can we account for Sri Krishna's preaching in the Bhagavad-Gita if the killing of people be an *absolute* sin *under all circumstances* ?

Killing is a sin without doubt. Even to injure another in thought and word is also a sin. Not a single recognised religion asks its followers to kill mercilessly or to be unkind to any living being. In its code of moral-conduct every religion lays much stress on love and compassion for all living beings. But then, in this world one life subsists at the cost of other lives. The lower life serves as food to higher life. In water, air, etc., there are innumerable living things which are invisible to the naked eye. In mere breathing, walking, talking, drinking and eating vegetables, grains and fruits one kills millions and millions of microscopic organisms. Taking all this into consideration, it would be clear that one can observe perfect Ahimsa only in Nirvikalpa Samadhi; in which state the body becomes almost a corpse devoid of breathing, moving and thinking. Apart from this state, life can continue only at the cost of other lives. That being the case, it is the circumstance and the attitude of the mind which make an act sinful. If the ego or "I" idea is absent while doing an act, one commits no sin. It is the idea of "I" and "Mine" alone that forges the fetters of bondage and makes one suffer hell fire.

In conclusion, and in considering what food and drink a Sadhaka should take, it should be seen what particular food and drink would suit him best. The food chosen should be sweet, pleasant, simple, nutritious and easily digestible. It must not bring on sense or stomach irritations. Rich food, highly-seasoned dishes, spices, stale and stinking food, sharp and bitter things, sour and pungent things, very hot things, myrobalans, betel-nut and betel leaves, *Conjee*-oil, sesamum, mustard, asafoetida, garlic, too much of sweets, sugar and salt, food once cooked and reheated after three hours—all these must be avoided. These things are harmful in as much as they produce lethargy and are not conducive to concentration. Those who live in very hot climates should take cool drinks and cold-producing food. But too much of these drinks and food is bad and harmful. So, a Sadhaka must beware and adjust their intake in moderation. And those who live in very cold climates should take heat-producing food and drinks just to make the body and mind work in a normal way. Every man, in whatever climate he may be living, hot, cold or temperate, must learn to know his requirements and adapt himself accordingly. But, wherever one may live and practise mind-control, one must be very regular in taking food at fixed hours. During the Sadhana period even one morsel of food, more or less, will prove injurious and will upset the mind. The stomach should never be overloaded. It is very injurious and brings on fall. It is safe to fill half the stomach with food-matter, one fourth with water and to leave the remaining one fourth empty. No food or drink should be taken actuated by the desire of taking it. One should never be a slave of one's tongue.

For a Sadhaka, to become a slave of the palate, is an unpardonable sin. It brings on a great fall also in mind-control and concentration. One must, therefore, exercise perfect control over the tongue. The desire for and hankering after any particular kind of drink or food must be scrupulously checked. Food and drink should be made pure and holy by mentally offering them to God before using them. This mental offering, in full faith, removes all their impurities.

Food and drink become impure under the following conditions and these should be avoided at all costs:—cooked food left over for three hours or more should not be taken by a Sadhaka. If taken, it will produce wind and stomach disorders. When dust, hair, and flies fall in food, it should not be taken. This is rational even from the hygenic point of view. Food should not be taken from the hands of an impure and wicked person nor from one who earns his livelihood illicitly. There is a thing called contagion. By taking such food and drink, a Sadhaka loses his power of concentration and the mind tends to become impure and sinful. Food prepared for the *Sraddha* ceremony (food offered in the name of a dead person) should not be taken by a Sadhaka.

It will prove very injurious. Apart from these prohibitions, common-sense (based on suitability and availability of things and time and clime) should be the chief deciding factor with regard to one's everyday food and drink.

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5

DISCRIMINATION AND DISPASSION

(Viveka And Vairagya)

Discrimination and dispassion (*Viveka* and *Vairagya*) always go together. Real discrimination is always followed by genuine dispassion. One must constantly discriminate between the Real and the unreal, good and bad, vice and virtue, etc. When one really begins to understand the unreality of the mundane things and the evanescent sense-pleasures, one is bound to run in search of the One Real Thing and Real Bliss. And this quest ultimately leads one to cultivate real dispassion to the fleeting sense-pleasures and to stick to the everlasting Bliss that accrues through the realization of one's own True Nature or Atman.

The idea of "I" and "Mine" is the cause of bondage. This idea is verily the hell. It is due to this idea that man suffers terribly. So long as this puny ego persists, one suffers hell-fire and there is no end to his miseries, worries, troubles and tribulations. The man who is keen on seeking after real Peace and Bliss, and he who is eager to control his mind and senses must eradicate this idea. This puny ego must die in a man before true knowledge or wisdom can dawn. This ego is the cause of all desires, thoughts and plannings. A planning-man, and a mind full of innumerable desires and thoughts can never gain perfect concentration. Therefore, one must, at first, discriminate between good and evil and discard all evil desires and thoughts and, in their place, fill one's mind with good and noble desires and thoughts. At a latter stage, one should learn to discard even these good desires and thoughts to attain perfect concentration of the mind. For, both good and evil desires and thoughts bind a man and act as hindrances in the way of the highest concentration of the mind.

When we run a thorn into our foot, we take it out with the help of another thorn or a needle and when the thorn is removed, we throw away the thorn or keep aside the needle used. Both of them now become useless for us. Likewise, to make the mind free from sins we should cultivate virtuous desires, thoughts and acts. And when the mind and heart become pure, we should leave off all desires and thoughts. Then only we can attain the highest kind of concentration. Every desire is a want and every want lies in duality. And this want makes the mind unsteady and fickle. In trying to pass a thread through the small eye of a needle, we have to twist it well and make it thoroughly one-pointed. If it is not well twisted and even if a fine cotton fibre projects this way or that, the thread cannot enter the eye of the needle. Even so is the case with the mind. Every desire, however fine and good it may be, is only like the projecting fibre which hinders the passing of the thread through the eye of the needle. So, in order to gain the highest kind of concentration (*Nirvikalpa Samadhi*), one must give up even the desire for *Moksha* or Freedom. That means, the mind must become perfectly free from every kind of desire. Then and then only one can attain *Samadhi*.

To eradicate the ego idea and to gain desirelessness of the mind, people adopt various methods. Some of these are: Raja-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga, Karma-Yoga and Jnana-Yoga. People in whom the gathering faculty of the mind predominates take up Raja-Yoga and they find it easy to control the mind through Pranayama and meditation and thus eradicate the ego idea by attaining Samadhi (Transcendental-state). People in whom the feeling faculty of the mind predominates take up Bhakti-Yoga and by this process they attain Samadhi and get rid of the ego idea. People in whom the willing faculty of the mind predominates, find it easy to take up Karma-Yoga and gain the purity of the mind and heart through selfless work, and thus attain Samadhi and go beyond the ego idea. And lastly, people who are blessed with a very sharp intellect and in whom the discriminative faculty of the mind predominates adopt Jnana-Yoga and attain Samadhi and thus go beyond the ego idea. Whatever path one may take up, the chief aim is to do away with the ego completely. A Bhakta eradicates it by constantly thinking of God, by worshipping Him, by loving Him and by keeping sincere prayers. A Jnani eradicates the puny ego by identifying himself with the Self and not the body. A Raja-Yogi eradicates the ego by controlling the senses and the mind and by constantly fixing the mind in God or Atman. A Karma-Yogi does so by doing every bit of work as worship and by considering himself as only the agent or servant of God. The ego is the cause of *Samsara* (the wheel of birth, growth, decay and death). Keeping one's ego in the centre, one builds up one's vast empire round it. And no sooner is this ego centre conquered than the whole empire goes to pieces and one gains Eternal Peace and Bliss.

Man suffers intensely in this world for lack of dispassion. An ordinary man gets attached to so many things, such as, wife, children, parents, friends, relatives, name, fame, wealth, etc. This attachment makes him suffer hell-fire and so long as one does not cultivate dispassion to these mundane things one cannot enjoy real Peace and Bliss. All things mundane are false. They are impermanent and ever changing. A man takes his birth in this world all alone and all alone does he depart after death. What follows him like a shadow is his good and bad effects of Karma (work). Friends and relatives, kith and kin, etc., are like the friends one makes on a railway journey. People going to different places meet one another in a railway compartment for the time being and become close friends for a while. But when their different destinations arrive, they alight one by one, bid good-bye to one another and depart. Likewise, are one's connections in this world. But, then, are all the people to renounce the world and become monks ? No. What is required is only a change of heart and a change in one's conception of the world which is really nothing but a projection of one's own mind. By proper training and understanding, one can live in this world really peacefully and work as a master. Real dispassion, therefore, lies in the correct attitude of one's mind. One should live in this world but the world should not live in one's mind. The boat may float on water but the water should never get into the boat. If water fills the boat, it will make the boat sink. So is the case with mind. Man can live in the world safely by cultivating real internal dispassion. Let there be no attachment to any one or anything. Love one and all, serve the poor, the sick and the maimed, but, at the same time, never get attached to anyone. It is a thing difficult to practise to begin with but in due course and with full faith, patience and diligence it becomes easy and congenial.

To gain concentration of the mind, dispassion is absolutely necessary. For, a desire-sticken man cannot have a steady mind and with that he cannot meditate. An unmeditative mind cannot have peace. A man who is unsteady and hankering after name, fame, money, pleasure, etc., can never concentrate his mind. Such a mind will be quite restless and fickle. People even amidst plenty to eat and drink often become most miserable, because they are slaves of their mind and senses and suffer from passionate attachment to sense-objects. It is only people who cultivate real dispassion that become really happy even without possessing anything. Thus, one's weal or woe depends upon one's own mind, i.e., according to the training given to it. If proper training is given and one learns how to cultivate dispassion and how to control the senses and the mind, one can really enjoy heaven in this very life on earth even in poverty.

Even from the point of view of good physical and mental health dispassion plays an important part in one's life. One must control and renounce all sorts of emotions. All painful or semi-painful emotions, such as, lust, anger, greed, pride, arrogance, hatred, fear, anxiety, jealousy, sorrow, etc., are deleterious in their effect on a person's mental and physical health. Whenever these emotions arise in a violent form, they throw the whole system into chaos, generate heat and poison in the blood, cause confusion in the brain, and kill millions of blood corpuscles, producing a variety of diseases such as nervous debility, fever, cough, indigestion, blood-pressure, tuberculosis, diabetes, etc. One can overcome a variety of diseases by real dispassion and gain longevity of life with sound mental and physical health.

Selfishness is one of the worst diseases these days. In every department and in every walk of life man has become very selfish. He is not satisfied with what he has. He lacks satisfaction badly. A poor man thinks that he will be happy if he can lay by even five rupees against a rainy day. When he succeeds in getting this amount he thinks it to be very little and wants more and still more. Even when he hoards a hundred rupees the amount appears to him to be too little and he wants to have at least a thousand rupees. Thus, there is no end to his desires. Thus hoping against hope and making new plans everyday, he leads a very miserable and dissatisfied life. The poor wretch, without knowing the value and importance of dispassion and without learning to lead a life of contentment; dies in harness. Selfishness has ruined the lives of individuals as well as nations. Discontentment and selfishness are the two main causes of bloody wars, oppression of the weak and innocent and the transformation of the world into a veritable hell. Everyone and every nation wants to be happy. Everyone wants good food, good drink, good clothes, good and well furnished houses, etc., at the cost of others. If all men and women learn to be really dispassionate, become kind, good, noble and generous and if they learn to control the mind and the senses they can really enjoy peace and happiness and bring the Kingdom of God on earth. Thus, to make speedy progress in mind-control and to succeed in its concentration, real dispassion is absolutely necessary. With worries, disease, pain and sorrow the powers of the mind get dissipated and it is very difficult to practise concentration. To control the mind, it should be kept calm, peaceful and un-ruffled by worldly desires, thoughts and worries. To gain this end there should be genuine dispassion towards all things seen, enjoyed and heard. Attachment to every thing mundane is a sin. It drags a man down and binds him. It retards his growth and his mind becomes polluted. So, there must be real dispassion and one must cultivate the spirit of renunciation, if one really wants to be successful in mind-control. For, the mind is a very subtle thing and it deceives a man in a variety of ways. One should, therefore, be on the alert, watch it constantly and put it on the right path.

Knowing full well the real value of dispassion, the Rishis of yore divided the life of a man into four Ashramas, viz., Brahmacharya (student), Grihasta (householder), Vanprastha (retired life), and Sannyasa (recluse). And they practised dispassion from the very start of life, i.e., as Brahmacharis. Every boy and girl of the higher castes had to observe strict Brahmacharya (celibacy) up to the age of twenty-five. During this period, they led a vigorous life of self-discipline and mind-control. During this early age, the students were taught to observe–"*simple living and high thinking*" and to live a life of perfect unselfishness. They were thus expected to become perfect masters of their senses and mind and were made to cultivate dispassion to things mundane. Those who were keen on leading a life of celibacy through-out their earthly career remained Brahmacharis and did not enter married life. And those who wished to become house-holders married at the age of twenty-five, i. e., after finishing their studies. Even after married life, they were all expected to lead a life of Dharma (righteousness) and cultivate dispassion. For, the aim of married life is the acquirement of Dharma (righteousness), Artha (accumulation of wealth), Kama (enjoyment), and Moksha (liberation). With Dharma as the basic acquirement, a householder had to earn wealth and that wealth was to be enjoyed according to the injunctions of Dharma. Lastly, when all the obligations of a married life were fulfilled, every husband and wife were to retire from all worldly activities and devote all their time in attaining Moksha. To practise dispassion at an advanced age, (unless one actually gets into the spirit of renunciation, i. e., as a result of some good merits (*Samskaras*) of past lives) is very difficult, indeed. A man then has to work under so many handicaps. Firstly, it becomes a great problem to keep good physical health. Secondly, the unbridled mind and senses are too fickle, and to control them and to put them on the right path is difficult. Thirdly, life-long habits and customs become too stubborn to be reformed and changed for good. Fourthly, one cannot struggle so hard physically and mentally as one can do in youth. So, the best period of one's life to cultivate dispassion and to practise control of the mind and the senses is later childhood and youth, i. e., the period between the ages of ten and thirty. Whatever habits one cultivates during this period of one's life are life-long. When these four Ashramas were strictly observed in India and the people walked on the path of Dharma, the whole nation prospered. India, then, rose to the zenith of Her glory. Degeneration came only with the fall of Ashramas and their Dharmas. But many people with insufficient knowledge ascribe the fall to religion, which is quite absurd. Even now, if India wants to prosper and give her age-long message to the world, and establish peace on earth, She must revive and rejuvenate her Dharma.

6

ASANA OR POSTURE

Asana means posture. There are innumerable postures but the Yogis consider eighty-four of them to be very useful. These Yoga-Asanas are meant for preserving good physical, mental and spiritual health. Regular and systematic practice of these Asanas makes the body strong, agile, healthy and very elastic. Asanas bring on keen and vigorous appetite, help to control emotions and to retain Brahmacharya (continence). They also distribute blood equally all over the body, tone up nerve-currents and keep the different organs of the body in sound working order so as to produce mental peace and to help concentration of the mind. Asanas cure diseases of many kinds. Even choronic ones are rooted out completely through regular and systematic practice of Asanas. Some of these Asanas help in awakening the Kundalini Shakti (central bodily power) also. Some of them are practised by standing, some, by lying down, some, by sitting and others with the head down-wards and legs upwards. Four of them are prescribed for the purpose of (i) doing Mantra-Jap (repeating God's name), (ii) Pranayama, (iii) awakening of the Kundalini Shakti and (iv) for practising concentration. And they are called Padmasana, Siddhasana, Swastikasana and Sukhasana. That Asana is the best and the most profitable in which a man can sit easily and comfortably for a pretty long time.

THE FOLLOWING RULES SHOULD BE OBSERVED :

The Asana must be firm and the body should not shake. With a shaking body one cannot practice concentration of mind or do Pranayama. On the other hand, the mind gets disturbed and one loses concentration when the body shakes. If a man can sit steadily and comfortably at a stretch for three hours in any one Asana, one gains Asana Siddhi (perfection in Asana). Always sit erect, with the head and chin slighty drawn backwards and upwards causing a slight contraction at the throat. Contract the anus lightly and drag it backwards and upwards. Do the same with lower abdomen. Let the body, i. e., the head, the neck and the chest be in a straight line, so that, the whole weight of the upper body may rest on the ribs. Always keep the spinal column in a straight line and the chest well forward. Never sit in a bent posture. Bent posture is very injurious and detrimental to mental and physical health. One cannot sit for a long time in a bent posture. Secondly, one cannot have high and elevating thoughts. Thirdly, one disturbs the free circulation of Prana-currents (nerve-currents). Fourthly, when a free circulation of nerve-currents is disturbed one is prone to fall a prey to diseases of various kinds. For, lack of nerve-currents in any part of the body or superfluous nerve-currents in any part of the body brings on disease in that particular part of the body. So, in keeping an erect posture one helps the free circulation of nerve-currents to the different parts of the body. Muladhara-Chakra (the meeting place of anus and the urethra canal) is the seat of the dynamo of the nerve-currents. *Ida* and *Pingala* are the two main sympathetics which carry the affarent and the effarent nerve-currents. These two main Nadis (nerves) are connected with Muladhara-Chakra and with innumerable other Nadis. Besides, Muladhara-Chakra is the seat of *Chitta* (mind-stuff) also. The thought-functions take place through the *Saraswati* Nadi.

(For further details kindly see the author's book: "THE PRIMAL POWER IN MAN OR THE KUNDALINI SHAKTI".) When one sits in a bent posture this Nadi (Saraswati) cannot function normally. So, in a bent posture one is liable to have more of evil and wicked thoughts automatically. Always sit erect as directed, and avoid pit-falls and dangers. Let one Asana be made one's own and it should be stuck to at all costs. One should always sit and practise meditation in that one Asana. In the first place one should sit in that one Asana for as long as possible but when one begins to feel uncomfortable and disturbed, one should shake the legs slowly. But, if the pain aggravates and one finds it impossible to continue in the same Asana, one should slowly change that posture to some other one. In changing the Asana, the body should never be allowed to shake. It should be done very slowly and smoothly, so that even if another man be sitting by, he may not observe the movement. When one sits quietly and meditates, one unconsciously attacks the Chitta (mind-stuff) or the Kundalini Shakti. The Kundalini Shakti gets heated and begins to send Its currents towards the brain-centre. The more these currents go upwards the more one enjoys concentration of the mind and true bliss. When one shakes the body violently, the up-going Kundalini-currents get disturbed and one loses one's concentration. Besides this, there occurs a great fall also. For, when the Kundalini-currents come down suddenly from the brain-centre, the first and foremost reaction is abnormal sexual-craving. Spiritual aspirants in ignorance of this great secret very often ruin their whole career. For this very reason and to save oneself from the inherent great danger, one should continue to sit in the same posture for at least ten to fifteen minutes after finishing meditation. Acts like eating, drinking, reading, talking, sleeping, etc., should never be indulged in immediately after meditation. One should sit quietly in one's seat and relax one's body and mind. If possible, one should cast a glance at the vast sky and widen the range of the vision of one's mind. This practice gives one's mind the idea of Infinity and helps in further meditations also.

For the practice of Mantra-Jap and meditation, a good place which is lovely, neat, even and picturesque should be selected. If one can obtain a solitary place away from the din and bustle of the world it would be very congenial to the practice. But if one can afford, a separate room should be set apart for the purpose of meditation only. The room thus selected must be airy and well-ventilated, free from dust, dirt, flies and other disturbing elements. This room should not be slept in. It should be always kept clean, pure and holy. No one of a different temperament and taste should be allowed to enter the room. It should be treated as a shrine and it should be entered only with clean clothes on and after a bath. No evil and wicked thoughts should be entertained inside the room. Photos and pictures of gods, goddesses, great Saints and of one's Ishta-Devata should be hung and kept inside. Even beautiful flowers in flower vases should be kept, if possible. A holy atmosphere should be sought to be created and efforts made to feel the Divine presence actually in that room. In the beginning, a little of imagination will be found to be quite necessary and if one follows these rules strictly for sometime and continues one's meditation and Mantra-Jap for some months, the room will actually begin to vibrate with peace and serenity and would actually feel in there the Divine presence even on entering it. This holy atmosphere always influences one's mind, helps meditation and elevates one spiritually. In due course, the room will so vibrate with serenity that even if one enters it in a disturbed state of mind, one would feel soothed and consoled. It will gain the power to still one's mind and so to influence it that it would be led to higher and nobler things automatically. That is why it is said that man makes the temples holy, but these, in turn, make him holy also. For, thought is a great force and one's faith, devotion and purity encircle one with an atmosphere of holiness. And ere long this holiness is imparted to the temple or the shrine which, in turn, begins to vibrate Divinity all round.

When a man desires and thinks, he sets up thought-vibrations of lesser or greater intensity. The force of a thought-vibration varies according to the purity, sincerity and concentration of the mind. Men are constantly sending out thought-vibrations into ether which is full of good, bad, weak, strong, evil and virtuous thought-vibrations. The mind in every creature is constantly throwing out such thought-emanations without rest or respite. These thought-waves radiate in all directions as light-waves do from their source. There is an aura vibrating round every person. It is nothing but the thought-vibrations that he or she constantly sends out. These create an atmosphere according to their nature and intensity. A pure, chaste and holy man creates a pure and holy atmosphere about him and carries it with him wherever he goes. A weak, wicked and evil minded man diffuses an evil atmosphere all round. One always carries along with one the thought-aura as determined by one's inner desires and thoughts. These thought-waves of every individual influence other minds. Thus are houses, places, temples and cities permeated by thought-vibrations according to the nature of the people living therein and they influence other people also. Different families, houses, places, temples and cities have their own characteristics. They have their own weak or strong, virtuous or vicious desires and thoughts vibrating in them and emanating from them. The house in which a couple leads a chaste, pure and virtuous life is always full of bright sunshine, fellowship and good cheer and the family prospers. Homes where the wife and husband live in discord and suspicion are dreary, cold and repellent. Whenever one visits an ancient sacred church, temple, mosque, pagoda or monastery, pure, holy and inspiring thoughts begin to surge in one's mind and one feels intense peace and bliss.

These holy places influence and automatically still the wandering mind, particularly so long as one remains in them. This is due to the thought-vibrations of millions of great men of the past and of the present who have visited the places and worshipped God with pure love and faith thereby creating a serene and holy atmosphere in them. It is this atmosphere that influences the visitors. These thought-emanations continue to vibrate in those places till they are changed by stronger and counter thought-waves. It was with this idea that the keeping of shrines holy came into vogue in different religions and this very idea applies to the meditation room also.

When a suitable place has been selected, one should make a clean seat by putting a Kusha-grass mat on the even floor of the room or on a cot about one or half a foot high. The cot should not be high so that one may not get injured, if by chance one has a fall. For, when one carries on with the practice of Pranayama and meditation and get into a trance or when the Kundalini Shakti makes Its ascent for the first time, some Sadhakas fall down unconsciously. To avoid this danger, the seat should be no higher than one foot or only half a foot. Above the Kusha-grass mat should be placed a tiger or deer skin and over that a clean cotton cloth covering the whole skin. If that be not possible, a cushion four feet by three feet and one inch thick should be got made and spread over a carpet. The cushion should then be covered with a clean cotton bed-sheet. One should sit upon this seat facing *North* or *East* in an *Asana* which is easy, steady and pleasant. One should never sit facing South. This is injurious for the following reasons: Scientists have discovered that electric currents travel North and South and when two magnets are kept side by side with their similar poles touching each other, they lose their magnetic power completely. But if magnets are kept with their unlike poles touching each other they retain their power indefinitely. That is to say, like poles repel each other and unlike poles attract each other. In the human body head represents the North-pole and the legs, the South-pole. And if a man always sleeps with his head to the North he soon loses his mental power. For this very reason Hindu Shastras (Scriptures) forbid a man to sleep with his head to the North. A Hindu is enjoined always to sleep with his head either to the East or to the South. The same rule is to be applied to Asana also.

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After taking one's seat, one should always send out good and elevating thoughts wishing welfare and peace to all living beings. One should say, "Let all beings be peaceful and happy for ever." Send out such a thought with all your force and sincerity to North, South, East, West, downwards and upwards. While wishing this benevolent thought one should sincerely think that one is actually sending out this thought and that the thought-force is actually spreading in different directions and covering the whole space. In the beginning a little imagination is necessary, but after long practice one does succeed in sending such thoughts with a mighty force. If all people practice this morning and evening, this world can be changed into a veritable heaven within a short time. There is no exaggeration in it. As a matter of fact, people are constantly injuring the world with all sorts of evil and wicked thoughts.

Why should one send out such good thoughts and what are the benefits ? As has been said, the ether is full of thought-vibrations; and they are, good and bad, strong and weak, benevolent and wicked, etc. When, one does not think and send out any thought, one is, as if it were, living in a closed room and, as such, safe from the influence of the external similar thought-waves that are vibrating in the ether. But as soon as one sends out good or evil thoughts, one opens, as if it were, a certain gate, and all the similar good or evil thoughts that are lurking in the ether enter one's mind and influence in a way to compel one to repeat the same thoughts again and again. So, by sending out evil and wicked thoughts, one injures so many other people with similar thoughts and one ruins oneself also. On the contrary, if one sends out good thoughts of peace, love, good-will and blessings, one helps so many other people with similar thoughts and the universe at large and, in turn, one's personal gain is not insignificant. This is the meaning underlying the idea of sending out good thoughts in different directions in the universe.

After thus sending out good thoughts in different directions, one should utter the Shanti-Mantra (Mantra of Peace) three times saying: "Om Shanti ! Om Shanti !! Om Shanti !!!". Here some may ask why should "Om Shanti" be uttered three times ? Why not only once ? The reason is this :—Every being has a body of three kinds, viz., gross, subtle and causal. Our waking-state experiences are gained with the help of the gross body. When we dream, we have no connection with the gross body. Then, our experiences are gained with the aid of the subtle body. We enjoy or suffer according to the nature of the dream and with the help of the subtle body. But in the deep-sleep-state, we maintain no connection either with the gross or with the subtle body. Then, we experience the bliss of sleep through the causal body. That is why we forget even disease and intense pain of the gross body when we go to deep-sleep.

It is quite possible that there may be so many disturbances when we sit down for Mantra-Jap and meditation. We may be disturbed by the physical body due to pain, disease, etc. In saying "Om Shanti" for the first time, we pray to God to keep our physical body strong and healthy, so that there may not be any kind of disturbance to our meditation from the gross body. Secondly, disturbances may arise from the subtle body and from external agencies like a friend calling or some people making a loud noise. The uttering of "Om Shanti" for the second time implies, that we pray to God to save us from all disturbances that arise from the subtle body and from external agencies. Thirdly, disturbances may arise from the causal body and from divinity, such as heavy storm, lightning, thunder, etc. The uttering of "Om Shanti" for the third time implies prayer to God to save us from all kinds of disturbances that arise from the causal body and from cosmic agencies.

After the Shanti-Mantra has been recited thrice, one should worship one's Guru mentally at the Sahasrara. One should think of a full-blown Lotus spreading its numerous petals at the crown of one's head and presume that one's Guru is sitting upon that Lotus, and his smiling face and holy body is radiating effulgent Light and blessings. One should then prostrate to the Guru mentally and worship him with flowers, garlands, sandal-paste, etc., and pray to him for blessings, for the removal of ignorance, and for light and right guidance. Let this be done in all sincerity and with full Bhava (feeling). Now comes the turn of the Istha-Devata (the chosen god or goddess whose Mantra one has taken), Who should be thought of at the heart-centre (in the centre of the heart-pit) sitting on a full-blown Lotus of eight petals. One should then merge the Guru-form in the form of the Istha-Devata thinking all the time that the Guru has become one with the Istha-Devata and begin worshipping Him mentally with flowers, garlands, sandal-paste, etc. One should pray to Him sincerely to remove all of one's past sins, to save one from all harm, pit-falls and dangers, to lead one on the right path and to grant one peace and strength of mind, character, wisdom and Enlightenment. Only sincere prayers without hypocrisy and guile and with full faith should be offered. Real and sincere prayers do get a response and they have a great spiritual value also. After the worship of the Istha-Devata, one should worship the Mother Kundalini Shakti at the Muladhara-Chakra with flowers, garlands and sandal-paste, etc. One should imagine a full blown Lotus of four petals at the meeting place of the anus and the urethra canal and think that the Mother of the universe Who is All-Powerful, beautiful, blissful and the very embodiment of wealth, success, wisdom and learning is standing with an effulgent body, smiling and blessing. After praying to the Mother as well for help, guidance and safety, one should awaken the Mother Shakti with the following words: "Wake up Mother ! Arise Mother ! And do reach the Goal this very moment." When these words are spoken, one should strike at the Muladhara-Chakra with the mind and will-power and presume that the Mother Shakti has fully risen up. One should then trace the mind from Muladhara-Chakra along the Sushumna Nadi to Sahasrara, and firmly believe that the Kundalini Shakti has fully risen up from Muladhara and has become one with Shiva (Lord) at Sahasrara. When this has been done, one should utter the Mantra: "Om Raṁ" (ॐ रँ). While reciting this Mantra one should think that there is a circle of fire protecting one from disturbances of all sorts both from the Devas (gods) and from the evil spirits. And now comes the time for one to begin one's Mantra-Jap and meditation.

7

THE MAHA BIJA MANTRA OR THE MONO-SYLLABLE "OM"

The word "OM" (ॐ) is called the Maha Bija Mantra. "Maha" means very great and "Bija Mantra" means the cause or origin of Mantra. "OM" is therefore, the great cause of all Mantras. All Vedic Mantras begin with "OM". "OM" is the first and the last word to be used in every religious ceremony. All hymns begin with "OM". All sacrificial rites, study of Scriptures, all Upanishads and all religious books begin with "OM". "OM" is the very essence of all the Vedas. It represents the Vedas. The universe has its origin in "OM", it lives in "OM" and finally, it dissolves in "OM". "OM" is known as Shabda-Brahman (Brahman as Sound), Taraka Mantra, and Pranava (the Mantra that runs through Prana (breath) and pervades all life). There are three letters in "OM", i.e., A U M. "A" is a gluttural and the starting point of a sound. "U" rolls from the root to the end of the mouth.

"M" is a labial and a nasal and comes from the end of the mouth. Thus "OM" represents all sounds. There can be no sound without "OM". As such, "OM" is the cause of all sounds and therefore, of all words.

Now let us see where from we get this word "OM". "OM" is not the fanciful creation or invention of some religious sects. It is the Cosmic sound heard by the Yogic-mind (highly pure, subtle and one-pointed mind). Brahman (The Supreme Being) and Its Creative Power are identical. They are like the obverse and reverse of the same coin. As such, they are one in essence, and quite inseparable. Brahman cannot be differentiated or thought of apart from Its Shakti (Prakriti Shakti). Though Brahman and Its Shakti are identical, they seem to diverge and deviate, as it were, in creation. It is the Prakriti Shakti (The Power of Brahman) that evolves as mind and matter and as this visible universe. Prakriti has three Gunas, viz., Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. These Gunas are the qualities as well as the substance of the Prakriti Shakti and the cause of creation. And there is not a single created thing devoid of these Gunas. They are the ultimate cause of the differences and distinctions seen between man and man, between a man and a woman, and between a Saint and a sinner, etc. In involution these three Gunas remain in equipoise. So long as they are in perfect balance, there can be no creation and Prakriti Shakti remains in Its quiescent form. But this state does not continue for long. For, the Gunas affect one another, make a stir and get their balance upset. With this upsetting starts creation. In creation when the Will of God (the Ichha Shakti) manifests Itself, It (that stage or state of creation) is called Nada. Nada means sound. When the three Gunas make a stir, they create a sound. This sound is not gross as heard by ordinary men. It is the most subtle aspect of a sound or the very starting point of a sound as experienced by a Yogic-mind. In this state of a sound (Nada), the meaning, the mental comprehension and the particulars thereof remain in their essence or unmanifested form. So, Nada is the first emanative stage of a manifested syllable, word or sentence. When Nada develops or when the Will of God comes to the point of creation, It is called Bindu. This Bindu is also called Shabda-Brahman (Brahman as the All-pervading Shabda (sound) or the Creative-Brahman). Shabda-Brahman is the source of all manifested sounds, meanings, and mental comprehensions. Shabda-Brahman is the causal state of all manifested sounds, and It is the All-pervading, undifferentiated Power while a Mantra is Its particular manifestation. From Shabda-Brahman originate the whole universe and its beings. The sound of the creative movement of Shabda-Brahman is the word "Om". From this one Mono-Syllable issue forth all the various sounds both lettered, i.e., with meaning and unlettered, i. e., without meaning. It is the starting point of all sounds. This one sound and Its meaning denote the totality of the universe. From this one sound come forth all letters and sounds. "Om" is eternal; there is no change in this sound. It is the common and universal sound, and as such, It is common to all the different languages of the world.

The words "Om", "Hum", "Ham"' "Aum", "Amen", "Ahmeen", bear the same meaning. There can be no word or sound without "Om". If we carefully watch and see we shall find that all sounds and words begin with Om and end with Om. The uproar of the sea, the splash of a water-fall, the murmur of a swiftly flowing stream, the humming of a bee, the buzzing of a beetle or a wasp, the roar of a lion, the braying of a donkey, the bellowing of a bull, the barking of a dog, the blowing of a conch shell, the continuous ringing of a bell, the beating of a drum, the long whistle of an engine, the cry of a child, the loud call of a man, and all sounds of other kinds clearly represent the sound Om or Omkara. "Om" is thus a universal sound; and no word can be uttered and no sound made without first producing this sacred sound.

The word "Om" with Its three letters (AUM) represents Trinity. Thus, "Om" stands for Brahma, the Creator and His Creative Power; Vishnu, the Preserver and His Protecting Power; and Shiva, the Destroyer and His Destroying Power. It stands for 'Sat - Chit - Ananda' (Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute). It represents Saraswati, (the goddess of learning), Lakshmi (the goddess of wealth) and Durga (the Mother of the universe). "Om" stands for time, space and causation; past, present and future; birth, growth and death; the beginning, the middle and the end; the three worlds (heaven, earth and hell); the three Vedas (Rig, Yajur and Sama); as also the Spirit, mind and matter; the waking, dream and dreamless-sleep-states; and the physical, the mental and the astral planes. As a whole, It indicates the Turiya-state (the fourth state of existence). Thus, "Om" is the most scientific symbol of the supreme Being (Brahman) and It is the most appropriate Name of that Supreme Being. It represents all the different symbols of God in various religions. If there is any One universal Mantra which represents the Supreme Being in all Its manifold powers and functions, and which can embrace and satisfy the multifarious creeds, doctrines, dogmas and religious sects, it is the Maha Bija Mantra "Om". This Mantra can be made use of by all with much benefit. It does not mean or represent any particular god or goddess; in fact, It includes and embraces all gods, goddesses, Saints, and their religions. As such, no sect, no doctrine, no religion need discard "Om". To discard It would be to betray one's ignorance in matters spiritual.

8

SECRETS OF MANTRA-JAP

The mind is a very subtle thing. It has no form and no colour of its own; but it takes the form and colour of the thought-object. A desire gives rise to a thought and a thought, in turn, becomes the cause of an act. We are what our past desires, thoughts and acts have made us. What we have sown in the past in the form of desires, thoughts and acts, that we are reaping now. Every cause is followed by its effect and every work is followed by its fruit. These cannot be avoided. What we call fate is nothing but the accumulated effect of our past desires, thoughts and acts. We are ourselves responsible for our present fortune or misfortune, our success or failure, etc.

The ordinary mind works from three planes, conscious, subconscious and unconscious, whereas the mind that has attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi works from the superconscious plane. The predominating desires and thoughts, i.e., the desires and thoughts that one loves and likes most and that occur to one daily in one's career, remain in the conscious plane of the mind. Unimportant desires and thoughts live in the subconscious plane for sometime; but if they are not recalled, they sink down to the unconscious plane. In recalling a past event, incident, desire, thought, etc., those that can be reproduced without deep thinking, emanate from the conscious plane of the mind and all those, that require a little of deep thinking come from the subconscious plane. There are some other past events, incidents, etc., which one cannot recall even in spite of thinking deeply for hours and days together. But such past desires, thoughts, acts, etc., are not lost for ever; they only sink down into the unconscious plane of the mind and remain in the mind-stuff (Chitta) in their causal state. Thus a vast and major portion of one's experiences (not only of the present birth, but even of past incarnations) lie in the unconscious plane of the mind. We call this plane as the unconscious plane, because an ordinary man is quite unconscious of this vast storage of knowledge. Only a Yogi who has attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi becomes an heir to this vast store of knowledge in this plane of the mind. For him there is no unconscious plane. As he works from the superconscious plane, he is able to acquire all this vast knowledge easily.

Character is nothing but a bundle of habits. When a desire, thought or act is repeated very often it becomes a habit. So, a man is made up of very many habits. In our daily activities, we give innumerable impressions to the mind in the form of desires, thoughts and acts. When we like a thing, love it and get attached to it, we create a very strong impression of the thing in the mind. The mind then begins constantly to desire and think of that object. In other words, the mind takes the form and colour of that object. When we hate a thing or object very much, or are afraid of it, or want to get rid of it, we also create a strong impression of the thing in the mind. If our liking or hatred is only mild, we create only a mild impression thereof in the mind. But when we have neither liking nor disliking and are indifferent to a desire, thought or act, we create only an indifferent kind of impression in the mind.

Yoga means *Chitta-Vritti-Nirodha*. When desires of all kinds subside and the different senses and the mind are calm, quiet and serene, one gains the Yoga-state. As ripples and waves are to the calm water surface of an ocean, so are desires and thoughts to the calmness and serenity of the mind. It is the desires that keep the mind wide-awake and, again, it is the desires that dissipate its powers. As has been said, innumerable desires live in the conscious, subconscious and unconscious planes of the mind. Only if all these living, hidden and suppressed desires are eradicated or nullified, can one gain the purity, serenity and one-pointedness of the mind. This wiping off of the desires is an uphill task. It is not one day's work. With many it is a life-long struggle. But the fact remains that one has to do it sooner or later, in this birth or in the births to come. Without a complete control and eradication of desires of the mind, one can never expect real Peace here or hereafter.

The easiest and, at the same time, the most efficacious method adopted to make the mind pure, serene and one-pointed is Mantra-Jap. Multifarious desires and thoughts should be made to make room for the one predominating desire and thought in one's career. It is the Mantra that should fill the mind all the twenty-four hours. The Mantra-Jap should be continued mentally while eating, drinking, walking, and even while sleeping. The Mantra should be made to vibrate in and out along with one's breath and heart-beats. When this is done, the mind can be easily controlled and all the multifarious desires are automatically destroyed. The more one does Mantra-Jap the better it is for one and immense is one's gain spiritually. Everytime the Mantra-Jap is done, good impression, after impression is given to one's conscious, sub-conscious and unconscious planes of the mind. And by this process, the mind along with the mind-stuff, slowly but steadily undergoes transformation for the better. The mind wholly occupies the meaning and the form of one's Mantra. Every Mantra has great power behind it. There is no difference between the Mantra and the Mantra-Devata (god or goddess of the Mantra). Along with the repetition of a Mantra, its Mantra Shakti (the power of the Mantra) is also brought into play. And thus the constant repetition of a Mantra makes the power of the Mantra manifest itself in the mind and the body of the practitioner. Mantra-Jap purifies the body, Nadis (nerves) and the mind. This three–fold purity facilitates the rising of the Kundalini Shakti from Muladhara to Sahasrara and thus is paved the way for one's Emancipation.

Again, in memorising a word, sentence, poem or a passage what we do is, to repeat very often the same word, sentence, etc., and think of it again and again. Thereby, we create a strong impression of it in the mind and mind-stuff. When we have to attend a certain important function which falls on a particular date, we remember the date of the function again and again and thereby give a strong impression of the date and of the function to the mind and mind-stuff. This strong impression enables us not to forget the date or to miss the function. Similarly, constant repetition of the Mantra-Jap in full faith and with intense feeling acts upon the mind miraculously and, ere long, it gets transformed and acquires purity, subtleness and one-pointedness. In short, one gains Yoga and becomes a Yogi.

A Mantra is the particular name of one's chosen Deity (Istha-Devata), i.e., the god or goddess that one likes, loves and adores the most. God is only One no doubt. He is Impersonal and Infinite. Yet, He manifests Himself under manifold names and in multifarious forms to suit the tastes and tendencies of His devotees. People of devotional temperaments love to worship God in certain forms of gods and goddesses. Besides, there are so many Cosmic energies working as gods and goddesses under the Supreme Command of God. As in the physical world a monarch has so many ministers and governors to help him in carrying on the work of administration, so are there so many Cosmic energies governing this universe and they are called Devatas (gods and goddesses). Very often most people take a fancy to one of these gods and goddesses and choose it as their Istha-Devata (chosen Deity). The name of this chosen Deity becomes the Istha-Mantra. This Mantra and the Istha-Devata are often chosen by the Guru (spiritual teacher) to suit the taste, tendency and spiritual growth of a disciple and the latter, under instructions of the Guru, worships the Deity, repeats the Mantra or does the Mantra-Jap every day in full faith and with deep devotion. As every Mantra has great power (Mantra Shakti) behind it, a Mantra, when well directed, works for one's Emancipation and vice-versa, if ill-directed. It acts like a sharp razor. If carefully used, it helps in shaving clean, but if improperly or carelessly used, it gives deep cuts and may even bring about death. There is no difference between God and His Name. Constant thinking of God and His Might and

Glory, and the uninterrupted repetition of His Name (Mantra) enables one's mind to take a godly form and to get transformed steadily and so as to gather infinite strength, purity and qualities of the Mantra Devata. That is why it is said that the Knower of Brahman becomes Brahman Itself. When the mind becomes pure and holy it begins to live in Brahman (Supreme Being or God) automatically and becomes one with Brahman. So, Mantra-Jap is one of the most simple, steady, scientific, efficacious and harmless method adopted to purify the whole mind, along with Chitta, to gain concentration, through its subtleness, and lastly to earn Emancipation by entering into Samadhi.

9

HOW TO DO MANTRA-JAP

Generally the Guru (spiritual guide) selects the Mantra according to the taste, tendency and spiritual growth of the disciple. All and sundry should not presume to be Gurus and select the Mantra for their disciples. Only a man of God-realization, i.e., one who has attained Samadhi, can know what the Istha-Mantra of a disciple should be and it is only he who can give him initiation. Such an initiation has a great spiritual value and it gives a real upward push to the disciple at the time of the Mantra-Diksha (initiation). *Mananat Trayate Iti Mantrah*, i. e., that by the constant thinking of which one is protected and released from the wheel of Samsara (wheel of birth, growth, decay and death) is called Mantra. This is what the Scriptures say.

When once a Mantra has been taken one should stick to it at all costs. It should never be given up till success is attained. One should have infinite faith in the words of one's Guru and in the Mantra. Faith is the *sin quo non* of success. Real faith can work miracles. When once the Guru and the Mantra has been chosen all doubts must be brushed aside. It would be infinitely better to let a bullet pierce one's heart than to entertain any doubt. For a doubting man can never reach the Goal, since he cannot make headway spiritually. A doubting man cannot work with a singleness of devotion and cannot enjoy peace of mind. Mantra-Jap is to be performed in full faith (*Shraddha*), with love (*Prem*), feeling and purity of heart and sincerity of purpose. Constant repetition of the selected Mantra given at the time of initiation is called Mantra-Jap. There are two ways in which this can be done: Jap with Dhyana and simple repetition of the Mantra. When the mind gets concentrated the Mantra stops automatically and the mind begins to live in the meaning of the Mantra. Istha-Mantra and its subtle form always go together. But in the initial stages one cannot grasp this fact as the mind is fickle and unsteady. In the beginning, therefore, the Mantra should be repeated very often. One should not worry about the wandering mind but work regularly and systematically. One should have infinite patience and perseverance and should never get dejected if no definite change in the mind is effected. Change there is and there shall always be; only it is very subtle and cannot be palpably noticed. For, Mantra-Jap produces harmony and steadily purges the mind of all its impurities. It is bound to lead one to Samadhi in the long run, and fill one with perfect Peace and Bliss. But this consummation cannot be realized within a few months. Regular and systematic work for years is necessary to achieve this highest objective of life.

When performing Mantra-Jap one should keep the meaning of the Mantra in the mind and think firmly that God is actually sitting in the heart-centre. One should also have infinite faith in the strength and efficacy of the Mantra and one's Istha-Devata. One should believe that God Who is Formless, All-pervading, Infinite, and One without a second, has assumed the form of one's Istha-Devata and that He is one's very Atman (Innermost Self). The Mantra should thus be recited constantly without rest or respite and one should take refuge in it. It should always be repeated with feeling. It should vibrate along with one's heart-beats. If one practices this regularly for sometime it would enable one to feel Divine presence, Divine glory and Divine consciousness. For, constant practice of Mantra-Jap checks one's loose thoughts and integrates the wandering mind and creates new *Samskaras* (new impressions) which continue gathering strength at the expense of the old ones.

One should be sincerely devout when reciting the Mantra. All other thoughts should be driven off from the mind and the world, even one's body should be forgotten and lost sight of. A Mantra is a Divine Power and takes the form of praises and appeal to the Deity for help and protection. Infinite faith in the Mantra and its Devata is, therefore, absolutely necessary. One should also be regular and systematic in Its daily performance.

The uttering of a Mantra can take three main forms, viz., *Manasika* (mental), *Upamsu* (Jap with labial, viz., humming or muttering), and *Vaikhari* (loud and audible). Manasika-Jap is done from the heart-centre. The Mantra is uttered at the heart-centre and none but the person offering this form of Jap can know of it. Manasika-Jap is the highest form of Jap. It is the most efficacious, but a novice often finds it very difficult to take it up. A spiritually advanced person, however, performs Manasika-Jap easily. Upamsu-Jap is to utter the Mantra in a whisper. A person nearby can hear the whisper and notice the parting of the lips in its performance. This form of Jap is better than the Vaikhari-Jap which consists in pronouncing the Mantra loudly for all to hear. A spiritual novice may find it easy to begin with this third form and then change over to the Upamsu and the Manasika forms.

Mantra-Jap should never be done in a hurry. The Mantra should always be pronounced very distinctly. It should neither be repeated too quickly nor too slowly. It should never be uttered loosely, carelessly and without *Shraddha* (faith). The Jap should always be performed in full faith, with attention and with the body and the mind clean. One should always sit erect (in the Asana selected) after washing one's feet, hands and face and rinsing one's mouth. While doing Jap one should never yawn or shake one's body. As far as possible, one should sit in a steady posture. This will make the mind active and remove drowsiness and sleep. Apart from doing Jap in a sitting posture, the Mantra should be made one's constant and unfailing companion. One should always repeat it and apply one's mind and heart to its tune. It should be repeated wherever one may go and whatever work one may do. One should be ever wakeful and let the Mantra vibrate through one's veins and nerves.

Some Sadhakas find it irksome to use Jap-Mala (beads) for counting the number of times the Mantra is repeated. They complain that it is difficult to utter the Mantra, count the beads and, at the same time, to fix the mind on the form of the Istha-Devata. It is difficult to start with no doubt. But, if one has a little patience and continues to do so for sometime, it becomes easy and very pleasant. Generally, with many people, Mantra-Jap becomes monotonous after sometime. The lips move with the Mantra automatically but the mind wanders to some other thing or place of interest. Sometimes people feel drowsy and fall asleep during Jap. Again during the time of action they feel interest in doing Mantra-Jap for a long time, but during the period of reaction they dislike sitting even for ten minutes. They find Jap and meditation insipid. It is during this time of reaction that many people give up spiritual Sadhana and their progress gets stranded. Such people can never make headway spiritually.

The work undertaken must be done regularly and systematically. The number of Jap, to be done should be fixed according to one's capacity and convenience. Mantra-Jap with Mala (beads) helps one to keep the mind alert and to fix it constantly on the Mantra, its meaning, and the counting to avoid the dangers mentioned above. In doing Mantra-Jap with beads one gets a correct idea of the time usually taken thereby enabling one to discard the aid of a watch. One can regulate the Asana also. The wandering mind gets restricted and disciplined. The possibility of the Jap being done in a hurry to suit the whims and fancies of the mind is eliminated.

A Jap-Mala (rosary) contains one hundred and eight beads. These beads may be made of *Rudraksha*, pieces cut and polished out of the roots of the *Tulsi* plant, or of glass or sandal wood. In counting the beads, slips occur very often and sometimes two beads are counted together as one. In order to allow a margin for slips of various kinds, eight extra beads are provided. Thus a counting of the full rosary of one hundred and eight beads really implies only hundred repetitions. Where the two ends of the rosary are brought together into a knot, there is generally placed a bigger bead. This is called *Meru* and is considered to be the seat of the Mantra-Devata. In counting the beads, one should start clockwise from the first bead from Meru and when one completes the circle and reaches the Meru again, one must not cross it but start counting anticlockwise; or, which is the same thing, turn the Mala inside out and start clockwise. The rosary should always be kept on the ring finger and the thumb and the middle finger should be used to count and slide. The fore-finger should not be used at all. The account of the Malas should be kept on the left hand. When one Mala is finished one should place the left hand thumb on the tip of the left hand little finger, and thus dividing each finger into five parts, one should move the thumb from part to part and finger to finger. Each finger will thus show five completed Malas or five hundred Japs. Another method is to take coins or stones of the requisite number and to remove one coin or stone from the heap after completing every Mala till the heap is finished.

There is yet another way of counting Mantra-Jap. Place the right hand thumb on the middle fleshy portion of the middle finger.

Count one here after finishing one Mantra-Jap; or start counting one while beginning the first Jap. Then for the second counting place the thumb on the lower fleshy part of the same finger. Subsequently, go on touching the lowest fleshy part of the little finger, then its middle part and lastly its tip and then the tips of the ring, middle and fore-finger; and lastly touch the middle and the lowest fleshy parts of the fore-finger. This cycle completes ten Mantras. Begin again with the thumb at the middle fleshy part of the right hand middle finger and continue the Jap.

Writing of Mantra-Jap: Take a clean note book and write your Ishta-Mantra daily, regulary and systematically. Fix the number of Jap for writing. This can be done at leisure. Wash your face, hands and legs. Clean your mouth and put on neat clothes. The Mantra-Jap is to be written only in a clean state of the mind and body. While writing the Mantra should be uttered mentally also. None should be talked to while it is being written. Perfect silence should be observed and every Mantra should be written in full faith and with intense feeling. Writing of Mantra-Jap makes the mind alert. There is no chance of going to sleep over it. The best way is to combine Mantra-Jap counting with a rosary to the fixed number of Jap and then to take up writing of Mantra-Jap. Besides this, a Sadhaka (spiritual aspirant) must do the Mantra-Jap mentally wherever he goes and in whatever he does. If a Sadhaka can observe these three things he can easily control the senses and the mind and attain Emancipation.

Reading of Mantra-Jap: There is yet another method of doing Mantra-Jap. It is to read the Mantra-Jap. Get the Ishta-Mantra printed or written in bold letters—one hundred and eight Mantras to a page or get a small pocket book of one hundred and eight pages with only one Mantra printed or written on a page. While reading the Mantra observe all the rules that are given for doing Mantra-Jap with a Mala.

10

THE NECESSITY OF A SYMBOL IN MEDITATION AND IN THINKING OF GOD

Desire is the first stage of a thought. When it develops, it becomes a thought. The two are the different stages of the same thing as bud and flower. They are not one and the same thing as many think out of sheer ignorance. A desire first occurs in the mind in the form of a subtle suggestion for a particular thing. That is to say, the mind first perceives a very subtle form of a thing in the brain-centre and then there arises the subtle desire for that particular object. Even at this stage an ordinary person is not fully aware of what he is doing or aiming at. With this subtle desire the mind then dives into the mind-stuff (Chitta) to get the past accumulated knowledge of the desired object. In Chitta, all the past knowledge of different objects, events, incidents, etc., is kept arranged in different pigeon-holes as it were. When the mind dives into the Chitta and gets this knowledge, it reacts and comes back to the region of heart. Here it comes into contact with consciousness and the subtle desire is converted into a gross desire. It is now that an ordinary man becomes fully aware of it. And when this desire comes back and reaches the brain-centre, it becomes a thought. As soon as the thought occurs, the subtle form of the thought-object occupies the mind. This shows that every desire and every thought has a subtle form behind it. There can be neither any desire nor any thought without first mentally seeing an object or without projecting a subtle mental image of a thing or object. Whenever we think and whenever we get knowledge of a certain thing, there is always a clear image of the thing thought of in the brain-centre. Without the mental projection of the image of the thought-object there cannot come any knowledge of it. That is to say, name and subtle form always go together, and the two are quite inseparable. The ordinary mind and intellect can work only under this limited process.

A man may be, very great intellectually and he may be far advanced spiritually, yet, he cannot dispense with name and its subtle form. Even a man who has attained Nirvikalpa

Samadhi, has to think with the help of a subtle form when he comes down to the plane of relative consciousness. In the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, there is no desire and no thought. Then, the mind, will, intellect, ego and Chitta all merge in the Supreme Spirit or Brahman, and so also do the ideas of the subject, object and knowledge. What remains and prevails in that state is the Ocean of Consciousness by Itself or in Itself. It is in this state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi alone that man can experience and understand the formless aspect of God. Apart from this state, life stands for perception of *Dwaita* (duality), and every thinking is done with a mental image of the thought-object. But in sheer ignorance man talks much nonsense against the use of symbols in worship of God and in meditation. This he does in ignorance of the secrets of mind and mind-functions. It is axiomatic, therefore, that in thinking of God, in worshipping Him and in meditating upon Him man cannot dispense with subtle or gross symbols.

God is only One without a second. He is Eternal, Infinite, Unchangeable, Immovable, Birthless, Growthless, Decayless, Deathless, Sexless and Formless. He is the material and efficient cause of this universe. As vapour becoming cooler and grosser, takes the form of cloud, water, ice, etc., in like manner, does the Shakti (Power) of God evolve Itself as mind and matter and as the multifarious names and forms of this universe. There is not a single thing devoid of God. He is in everything and everywhere. God cannot be designated as He, She or It; but, all the same, He, She or It are being constantly used in speaking of God. God has no particular name and form; all the same, He reveals Himself to His devotees through numerous names and forms according to their desires and likings.

To illustrate, take a child just learning the three R's. The teacher first gives the child a slate and a slate-pencil and makes it write bold letters and figures. When the child becomes efficient and succeeds in writing letters and figures in a bold hand, it is made to write in fine script and is gradually led to use pen and paper to write neatly and beautifully. As we proceed from the grosser to the subtler things in the material world so also have we to do in the spiritual realm. God is subtler than the subtlest object, and, as such, the finite mind cannot think of It in Its Essence Form. When a man takes the name of God or Brahman, he mentally projects a subtle form of his own according to his pre-knowledge and thereby understands Him as such. Even the man who claims to be a follower of Jnana-Yoga and boasts of thinking of Brahman in its Formless Aspect or who regards Brahman as Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute), is obliged to think of Akasa (ether) or the wide expanse of sea-water to form an idea of the All-pervasiveness of Brahman. A man who regards God as All-powerful and All-merciful, has to think of a mighty but kind emperor. Thus, in expressions of all kinds, however fine the wordings thereof may be, man as man with a finite mind, can never conceive of Infinity or the Formless Aspect of Brahman without the aid of a symbol or an image which may be either gross or subtle.

There is no religion according to which and no man before the attainment of Nirvikalpa Samadhi by whom symbols can be discarded completely in forming a true conception of God. It is for this reason that different religions of the world have introduced a variety of symbols, both gross and subtle, in the worship of God. As a man passes through different stages from birth to manhood, so does a spiritual aspirant pass through the different stages of spiritual practices before he attains Nirvikalpa Samadhi and experiences the Formless Aspect of God or Brahman. One should, therefore, begin meditation and concentration on gross forms and then take to subtle and still subtler forms till one finally attains Nirvikalpa Samadhi and is able to dispense with all sorts of symbols. This, in fact, is a necessity. For example, take a soldier who learns how to shoot. He first takes aim at bigger targets and when he succeeds therein, he takes to smaller ones till he finally becomes a dead shot. In like manner, does a spiritual tiro first take up gross symbols in thinking of God in order to gain purity, subtleness and one-pointedness of the mind. When the mind becomes pure, subtle and one-pointed the spiritual aspirant automatically takes to finer and subtler forms for meditation and, finally, on attaining Nirvikalpa Samadhi goes beyond name and form and feels no necessity for any kind of symbol.

The founders of different religions have prescribed different methods and different symbols for the use of their followers for the worship of God, to suit their tastes and in confirmity with their spiritual growth. Some religions call God the All-Merciful Father in heaven; others call God the All–Merciful Mother, while some others call Him the Beloved friend, and so on and so forth. Some worship God through Saints and God–men. There are still others who worship Him through fire, Yantras and Mantras (mystic diagrams and mystic syllables). Thus, the ways and symbols adopted by different religions are innumerable to suit individuals of multifarious temperaments and spiritual evolutions. The symbol may be very gross, but the devotee does not take that image as image, as mere stone or the like. He sees Divinity, perceives Divinity and conceives Divinity in the image. He gives all Divine qualities to the image he worships. He perceives Divine presence in the object of his worship. And as he makes headway spiritually, the lower and grosser symbols and images fall off by themselves like dry leaves from a tree. The aspirant then makes use of the subtler and higher kinds of symbols till he attains the Highest and finally dispenses with all kinds of symbols. Thus in religion and in mind-control symbols play a very important part and cannot be scrapped as valueless.

11

WILL–POWER, ITS LOSS AND GAIN

Will-power is one of the faculties of the mind which makes one think, speak, and act: Intellect or the discriminative faculty of the mind discriminates, decides, and gives knowledge of things. When a decision has been made and knowledge gained, will-power works out the decision through the Indriyas (senses) and the body. The senses and the body cannot work by themselves without the will stimulating and goading them consciously or unconsciously. Before speaking, we first desire, think, decide and lastly will and then speak. Without this process, (though it has become an automatic process with many) we cannot speak. If we want to see, hear, touch, taste or smell, we first desire, think, decide and will and then only the corresponding senses work. In all mental and physical activities we first desire (this desire is in the form of a suggestion), think, and come to a definite conclusion and lastly we will and act. There is no mental or physical action without this process.

Will-power grows strong and becomes weak; it waxes and wanes. In youth and middle age it is generally strong and grows weaker with age. As a result of a protracted illness or chronic disease and excess in loss of sexual-energy, will-power becomes very weak. As the vast majority of men and women do not regulate their sexual-life, they generally possess weak will-power. It depends entirely upon an individual to make his will-power strong or weak. Purity, subtleness and one-pointedness of the mind generate and ensure adamantine will-power. A Saint, a pure man, a holy man, a man of good character and conduct, and a Brahmachari (a celibate), generally possess strong and adamantine will-power. A man of strong will-power never procrastinates. He is quick in making decisions and definite in his replies. As has already been said, purity of mind, quick and sound decision, adamantine will-power and saintliness always go together. Such men enjoy peace of mind and live upto their professions. Their thoughts, words and deeds correspond with one another. They never come into conflict with one another. Even if their bodies are cut into pieces they do not swerve at all from their conclusions or decisions. Men of will-power wield great power and speak with conviction, force and authority. There is no cunningness or cheekiness about them and they are far removed from duplicity and diplomacy. On the contrary, they are always truthful, straight-forward, chaste and unselfish.

Will-power depends upon the purity of the mind; it is weakened by its impurity. The mind becomes impure through multifarious desires. It is these that dissipate the powers of the mind. And desires are concerned chiefly with the enjoyment of the five gross and five subtle senses. Desires creep up in the mind as a result of the ego idea which, in turn, is the cause of bondage and of untold miseries. So, the man who is anxious to gain will-power must first purify the mind. And to make the mind pure one must kill the ego idea, eradicate all desires, exercise control over the senses and practice concentration. Will-power cannot be developed otherwise.

A Brahmachari (a celibate) enjoys very strong will-power even in advanced age. And a true Brahmachari, viz., one who has established himself in Brahmacharya in thought, word and deed always possesses adamantine will-power. Such a man can move heaven and earth and there is nothing impossible for him to attain. On the contrary, reckless sexual-life renders will-power very weak. It is through a well-regulated sexual-life that one can retain normal will-power. Therefore, to gain will-power, and purity and one-pointedness of the mind one must observe strict Brahmacharya and to attain normal will-power one should, at least, lead a well-regulated sexual-life. For, sexual-energy is the very sap of life and when this most sacred and most important energy is wasted, one makes one's life miserable. On the other hand, if it is checked, controlled, preserved and conserved, it gets converted into a very great mental power called 'Ojas Shakti.' On gaining this Shakti, one automatically gains purity, one-pointedness and subtleness of the mind with a sharp intellect, strong memory and adamantine will-power. So, to develop will-power and to gain the hidden higher powers of the mind, one must get oneself established in perfect Brahmacharya.

A ruffled state of mind, ficklemindedness, unsteadiness, loss of cheerfulness, loss of self-confidence, doubt, procrastination, unsteady gaze, haggard looks, peevishness, loss of memory, clouded intellect, lustful desires and thoughts, fear, etc., are all the symptoms of weak will-power.

How To Gain Will-Power : 1. First of all, find out what your weaknesses, drawbacks, loop-holes, sins and sinful acts are. Make a thorough study of them. Map out the miseries, pains, humiliations, sorrows, troubles and tribulations you undergo as a result thereof. Discriminate, and bring into memory the infinite good that will accrue to you by shunning them and by turning over a new leaf. Think perseveringly and discriminate properly. Decide whether you want happiness and success or misery and failure. For Freedom and Bliss you must control your mind and senses and give up the sinful, evanescent sense-pleasures. In becoming a slave to your emotional feelings, senses and mind, you would lose eternal Peace and Bliss. Question yourself repeatedly, remember what evils and sufferings would follow if the wrong path is chosen and, finally, come to a conclusion and create real dispassion for all things mundane and for momentary sense-pleasures. Once this conclusion is reached, be firm in your resolve. Do not give way to weaknesses and emotional feelings again. Be strong. Sum up courage and strength and stick to your resolve at all costs.

2. Make a time-table for yourself and divide the time for work, worship, respite, etc., according to your convenience. Follow the time-table scrupulously. Make no compromises in carrying on with your daily work. If you are only very careful and perform your daily duties regularly and methodically, you are sure to gain the lost will-power ere long.

3. Read good, inspiring and elevating books that deal with God, philosophy, devotion and lives of great Saints. Such readings will surely help you in building up will-power.

4. Mix freely with great men, men of good, pure and strong character and God-realized men and render them free service. This will help you very much to build your character, to gain purity of mind and heart and make all-round progress.

5. Avoid evil company, particularly the company of the wicked and debaucherous people. Do not read erotic novels, nor see pictures that make a sexual appeal. These will surely increase your difficulties and hinder progress.

6. Talk sparingly but sweetly and usefully. Too much talking entails loss of mental energy and makes the mind fickle. People who talk much generally lag behind practically. They

fritter away their energy in words. Therefore, try to conserve this great energy of the body and mind. The more you conserve this energy, the more will be your gain in will-power and spiritual growth. If your daily occupation permits and if possible otherwise, try to observe Mouna (silence) daily for some hours or, at least, once in a week. This practice, if carried on regularly, would enable you to feel and realize the growth of your will-power and of your moral being.

7. As has been said in a previous chapter, regulate your diet. Never overload the stomach. For, a bad stomach is the cause of many of the evils, bad thoughts, diseases and failures.

8. Make a strong resolve to root out your evils. Be guided by high, noble and elevating maxims akin to your resolve and try to act upon them with all the zeal and fervour you are capable of. Be patient, work hard and never yield to temptations. There will be failures to begin with. Do not worry about them. Only do no wrong knowingly. Watch your mind carefully, find out the evils it is prone to and adopt proper ways and means to eradicate them completely. Whenever you have to do something which is good and profitable and,

at the same time, your duty to do, do it at once. Do not procrastinate in such matters. Never wait for tomorrow which never comes. Do not make yourself a dupe of your own mind and senses. For, an impure mind always tries to sneak and to shirk responsibility and is easily caught in its own snares.

9. Pay particular attention to small and seemingly unimportant things. Never neglect anything. For, a man who learns to neglect small and unimportant things will certainly neglect great and important things too, as the mind thereby unconsciously forms the habit of shirking every kind of responsibility.

10. Adopt slow but steady methods to remove evil habits. If you are a victim to sexual-indulgence and wish to turn over to Brahmacharya, do not jump to it suddenly nor take a vow to observe it strictly all at once. Do not be hasty. Instead, think, discriminate and then make a firm resolve to leave the dirty habit. Take all possible care and all necessary precautions to avoid associations that produce lascivious desires and thoughts. To begin with restrict your enjoyments to the minimum on certain fixed days. When you find the necessary strength and confidence

in yourself postpone indulgence to different months and so on till you finally give up the habit for ever. In the initial stages watch the mind and the senses, and whenever vulgar desires and thoughts appear, discriminate, check and control them by remembering your resolve and the immense good you will do to yourself through the observance of Brahmacharya. Even at the time fixed for it, try not to yield to carnality too easily. Make a struggle and try to prolong the time of avoidance as far as possible. Only when you cannot help it, should you yield. Coax the mind to draw it further and further away from the action. But do not get worried if you fail. Have infinite patience and persevere indefatigably. If you are really sincere and take necessary precautions you will surely succeed in rooting-out the weaknesses and build up your will-power.

11. Try to keep the mind in perfect equipoise under all circumstances. Never lose the balance of mind in weal or woe, pain or pleasure, and in all the other pairs of opposites. Always try to exercise control to retain your equilibrium and, adjust yourself to different circumstances without complaint. This will increase your will-power.

12. Proceed with Mantra-Jap and meditation regularly in the morning as well as in the evening. Always keep the mind engaged in the repetition of your Istha-Mantra. Remember your Istha-Devata and the Istha-Mantra constantly. Let these two be your constant companions, the very part and parcel of your life. In each you have an unfailing friend, guide and saviour. Mantra-Jap and meditation help to ensure one-pointedness and purity of the mind and the building up of character and will-power.

13. Never lose hope. Be full of high hopes and keep high ideals before you. Have infinite faith—faith in yourself, faith in God, faith in the words of your Guru and faith in the Scriptures. Never look down upon yourself. Never brood over your weaknesses, drawbacks, sins and falls. If you are a sinner today, you can be a Saint tomorrow, only if you will. Self-confidence will fill you with infinite strength and power. Good thoughts and noble deeds will make you great; improper desires, thoughts and acts will make you sink lower. The world is nothing but a projection of your own mind. As you think, so you become. The mind is a very subtle thing. It has no form and no colour of its own and it takes the form and colour of

the thought-objects. Hence, when you constantly think of and live in great, noble and elevating thoughts, your mind will take the form of those thoughts and you will become great. On the contrary, if your mind continues to live in sinful, low and vulgar desires and thoughts, you are sure to become a miserable wretch. With vulgar and low desires and thoughts a man suffers hell-fire even in this world. Our present weal or woe is the outcome of our past good or bad desires, thoughts and acts. And our future enjoyments and sufferings entirely depend upon our present good or bad desires, thoughts and deeds. You should, therefore always cherish good, noble, high and elevating desires and thoughts and resolve resolutely, and act righteously. If you constantly think of God, His Might and Glories, you will surely become like Him ere long. To build up will-power, therefore, high and elevating thoughts are absolutely necessary.

14. The senses restrained, checked and controlled and the mind well-trained and purified, are a man's faithful friends and true guides. But if they are ill-trained, unrestrained and impure, they betray a man and act as his enemy. Constant practice of self-discipline and self-

control as also eternal vigilance are, therefore, absolutely necessary for one who really wants to make headway spiritually and wishes to gain purity of mind and gigantic will-power.

15. Character is nothing but a bundle of habits. When a desire, thought or act is constantly repeated, it becomes a habit. It becomes a habit with a man to desire, think and act in a particular way. When one holds the pen in a particular way and keeps on doing so in writing it becomes a habit, and one can write well only in that particular position of the pen. Thus, good or evil desires, thoughts, acts and habits are of our own making. We have desired certain things in the past, have thought of them and have acted in certain good or bad ways. These have created in the Chitta (mind-stuff) impressions, which, acting upon the mind and senses, have automatically formed themselves into habits. What is wanted is to root them out by bringing into action desires, thoughts and actions of the opposite nature. In eradicating evil, weak and wicked desires, thoughts and acts, you must constantly think of and live in good, noble and elevating desires and thoughts and always do good deeds. This will purify your mind and build-up your will-power.

The Symptoms of Growing Will–Power:–Purity, serenity and steadiness of the mind, good concentration, peace, calmness, self-control, lack of evil desires, steady gaze, strong memory, good character, self-confidence, lack of procrastination, clear intellect, quick and apt decisions are some of the sure symptoms of growing will-power. For, purity and steadiness of the mind, strong memory, automatic control over all the senses and the gaining of gigantic will-power always go together. A pure mind is always steady and a steady mind is always calm, serene and peaceful.

12

DESIRE, ITS CAUSE AND CONTROL

Desire is the primary cause of this *Samsara* (this world of birth, growth, decay and death), bondage and of untold miseries. It is desires that bind a man and rob him of his peace of mind. They also make him suffer hell-fire helplessly. The ego ("I" idea) is the cause of all desires. They creep up in the mind with this idea. But for this little "I", there would have been no desire. Desire is an impulse towards an external object in which one finds some interest. Desires are always for the enjoyment of the five senses, viz., hearing, touching, seeing, tasting and smelling. We desire to hear sweet musical voices and sounds but abhor harsh words and rough and grating sounds. We like smooth, velvety touch but dislike that which is rough and hard. We love to see beautiful things but feel an aversion for those that are ugly and horrible. We have a weakness for sweet and delicious dishes but discard those that do not suit our palate. We delightfully appreciate sweet scents and fragrant odours but avoid foul and stinking smells. It will thus be seen that desires are of two kinds, viz., desire to possess things agreeable and desire to avoid things disagreeable.

A man desires a healthy, handsome body and a prepossessing appearance. He wishes to acquire knowledge and to dispel ignorance. A worldly man desires wealth, a comfortable house to live in, a young, beautiful, healthy, obedient and loving partner, and good, handsome, strong and active children, etc. When he gets all these things, he longs for good position or status in society, and tries to win name and fame. Some even desire to serve their parents, family, kith and kin, country and humanity at large. Innumerable desires are constantly creeping up in the mind of an ordinary man. It is these that provide him with the necessary impetus to carry on with his work even in the face of failures, troubles and tribulations. Hoping against hope, he continues his struggle. If he fails in his efforts today he hopes to succeed tomorrow and perseveres with infinite patience and against all odds. The chief motive underlying all desires is happiness. Man is actually in search of real

Peace, Bliss and Freedom; but, through ignorance, he thinks that real happiness lies in worldly possessions and in the enjoyment of evanescent sense-pleasures. The more he has of these things, the more he sinks in bondage and the more he makes his life miserable. In trying to satisfy one desire, he creates a hundred new desires and thus increases his worries and miseries a hundred-fold. A desire sticken-man is a helpless man. He has no peace of mind. Failing to achieve his object by fair means, he takes recourse to nefarious practices. Most of the evils of the world, such as lying, swindling, debauchery, theft, murder, etc., owe their very existence to the fact that unsuccessful desire-stricken men generally resort to foul means to achieve the objects of their unfulfilled desires. Had it not been for his desires, man would have easily known his own True Nature and enjoyed perfect Peace, and Bliss in life.

All the multifarious desires can be grouped under two main heads, viz., good and bad. Evil desires produce evil thoughts, result in evil, sinful actions and lead a man away from God. Such a man suffers hell-fire. On the contrary, good desires generate good thoughts which germinate into noble deeds and make a man virtuous and holy. Such a man alone enjoys real peace of mind and thirsts for God-realization. All the same, every desire, good or bad, forges fetters and binds. For, there is not a single desire, thought or act that can be called absolutely good or bad. As a matter of fact, each is a strange mixture of good and evil. A close analysis reveals that even an act which is called very good has something bad in it and an act that is termed very bad is not without a tinge of goodness in it. A desire, thought or act that results in more good and less evil is calld good, while the one that causes less good and more evil is called bad. Thus, both good and bad desires, thoughts and acts bind a man. A Truth-seeker must go beyond these both to attain the Highest. In the beginning, however, a man should take the aid of good and elevating desires, thoughts and acts to get rid of the evil and wicked desires, thoughts and acts. It is thus that he would begin to make headway spiritually and gain purity of body, Nadis (nerves) and mind to a great extent. But finally he must banish and renounce desires, thoughts and acts of both categories to be able to merge the mind in Infinity.

Desires are born of ignorance and they are generally for things that one has already seen, touched, tasted, smelt or heard. Sometimes a man may, however, build castles in the air; that is to say, he may desire for things imaginary. But very often such desires are only fanciful and not strong. Ordinarily, a man desires for objects that he has seen and enjoyed and such desires being very strong and powerful, he is led into action almost immediately.

The force of a desire or a thought differs and it is of three main kinds, i.e., mild, middling and intense. A mild desire and thought passes away unnoticed. A desire and thought of a middling nature makes one act leisurely and at ease; whereas an intense desire and thought brooks no delay and goads one to act immediately. A desire always creeps up in the mind with the idea of duality. Ignorance is the cause of duality. Hope, attachment and longing strengthen every desire. A man desires to possess a thing which is apart from him. When one begins to feel and see one's own Self everywhere and in everything or when one perceives Brahman in every object all desires subside automatically. Actually there is only One Thing. That is Brahman or God, All-pervading, Eternal and Infinite. That is the One Unchangeable and changeless Thing behind all the changing things of the universe. It is the names and forms that change constantly. Bereft of names and forms, what remains is God and God alone. Something can never come out of nothing. God is the efficient and material cause of the universe. When a man actually realizes this One Truth, viz., the Oneness of God, all his desires vanish for ever. But to attain this, a man must discriminate and practice dispassion for all mundane things.

A subtle desire is the cause of a gross desire and a gross desire, in turn, is the cause of a thought. When a desire develops it becomes a thought. The further development of a thought results in speech and physical action. The past memory of desires, thoughts and acts remain in their causal states in the Chitta (mind-stuff). These past Samskaras (imprints of past experience living in their subtle and causal states) often rise up to the conscious plane of the mind as a result of the followings: 1. The willing process. 2. The mind's mad rambles over the past desires the imprints of which live and lurk in their subtle and causal forms in the sub-conscious and unconscious planes of the mind. 3. Sense-irritations and internal and external stimuli. 4. Automatic thought-currents generated by the Kundalini Shakti's upward-going currents. 5. Senses coming in contact with the sense-objects out-side. 6. And, sometimes a desire, thought, act, thing, place or event, producing the desire and thought of a similar past desire, thought, act, etc. A subtle desire first rises in the mind in the form of a suggestion for a particular thing. At this stage man is not quite conscious of it, but even unconsciously aims at securing a particular thing or object. With this subtle suggestion the mind dives into the mind-stuff in search of past knowledge (memory) of the subtle desire and on getting it, it reacts, and comes to the heart-region where it comes into contact with consciousness. The subtle desire now becomes a gross desire and a man becomes quite conscious of it. When the mind with the gross desire reaches the brain-centre, the intellect, will and ego come into play and the gross desire becomes a thought. As this thought develops there arises a series of successive thoughts pertaining to that one desire and thought. All this lengthy process takes place in the mind within no time, and, as such, it completely escapes the notice of an ordinary man. Only when the mind becomes pure, subtle and one-pointed and one closely studies the mind and thought-functions, can one clearly detect this most subtle process.

As has already been said, every desire is a want and every want is in duality. All desires and thoughts creep up in the mind as a result of the idea of duality. This idea comes into existence through the ego idea, and the ego idea comes from ignorance of one's own True Nature.. Dispel this ignorance and the ego idea vanishes automatically and so do all desires and thoughts in consequence. It is with the ego idea that one loves or hates. One desires to possess a thing which he finds to be of some utility and value for one's happiness. And one desires to avoid or get rid of a thing from which he apprehends trouble, danger, pain and misfortune. It is the objects of love and hate that produce desires and thoughts in man. Whatever its force (mild, middling or intense) every desire and thought leaves an impression or mark in the mind and Chitta (mind-stuff). A desire and thought not properly attended to sinks down into Chitta and leaves there a very mild impression which is soon obliterated from the conscious and sub-conscious planes of the mind. When one pays attention to a desire and thought, it creates an impression of a middling nature in the mind and mind-stuff which lives in the conscious plane of the mind for some time. But if not recalled, it sinks down to the sub-conscious plane and lives there for a much longer period in a subtle form. And, if it is not recalled even in this period, it sinks down into the unconscious plane of the mind and lives there in its causal form. But when a man loves a thing ardently and gets attached to it passionately, he constantly desires and thinks of that object and thereby creates a very strong impression of that object in his mind and Chitta. Then the desire and thought of that particular object occupies his whole mind and he constantly remembers that object. Innumerable impressions of the past and the present, are always living in their gross, subtle and causal forms in the mind and Chitta. A desire which lives in the conscious plane of the mind is a gross desire, and lives in the gross state. Desire of this kind requires no deep thinking to bring it to memory. A desire which lives in the sub-conscious plane of the mind is a subtle desire and lives in the subtle state. Such a desire requires a little deep thinking to bring it to memory. A desire which lives in the unconscious plane of the mind is a causal desire and lives in the causal state. An ordinary man cannot recall such a desire even in spite of deep thinking for hours and days together. But often these hidden desires appear as dreams and instincts. A Yogi, who has attained Samadhi becomes a master of this plane (un-conscious plane) of the mind and thereby he becomes Superconscious or Omniscient. Often the mind in its mad rambles comes into contact with the gross and subtle desires that live and lurk in the conscious and sub-conscious planes of the mind and suddenly there arises a subtle desire for a certain thing according to the nature of the desire that the mind comes into contact with, which, in turn, develops into a gross desire and thought as explained above. At other times the Kundalini-currents carry desires in their causal-states from Chitta. And when these reach the heart-centre they turn into gross desires for particular objects according to their nature. And finally reaching the brain-centre they develop into thoughts.

When one feels hungry or thirsty, one desires to eat or drink something. When one feels hot or cold one desires to have a cold or heat producing food or drink and a similar place to live in. When one feels the urge to attend to the call of nature, one desires to go to a lavatory. When there is pain or itching sensation in any part of the body, one desires and thinks of gently rubbing or massaging that particular part of the body. Such desires arise in the mind to meet a bodily necessity but these can be avoided, suppressed or controlled, if need be.

Suppose a youngman sees a young beautiful woman. If he is a debauchee, lascivious desires and thoughts come to occupy his mind. On the contrary, if he is a celibate or a man of strong character, he does not cherish any carnal desires and thoughts but looks upon her as a sister. Lascivious desires and thoughts do not arise in man when he sees his own beautiful young sister. This is because he has trained his mind in that particular way. Thus, such desires and thoughts creep up in the mind according to the training imparted to the mind. The mind works automatically in a particular way as a result of the early training it has received.

How To Control Desires: Desires exist in the mind and Chitta (mind-stuff) in their gross, subtle and causal states. To control and then to eradicate all desires is herculean task entailing sustained effort for a very long time. There may be some people of virtuous Samskaras (good past merits), who may accomplish this uphill task within a short time, but they constitute the exceptions rather than the rule. Apart from these great men, ordinary people have to work hard day and night for months and years together to banish all desires of the mind. In fact, complete eradication of all desires takes place only after the attainment of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. It is in this state that the mind along with Chitta merges in the Supreme Spirit or Brahman and all desires in their gross, subtle and causal states are destroyed. When such a man's (he is known as *Jivan-Mukta*, i.e., Living Free) mind comes down from that Transcendental-state to the plane of relative-consciousness, he is no more bound by desires of any kind whatsoever, because he sees Brahman and Brahman alone behind all names and forms of this universe. As such, he retains perfect equanimity of mind under all circumstances and under all the pairs of opposites. This does not mean that on the attainment of Nirvikalpa Samadhi a man is no better than a stone or log of wood. Here is a beautiful passage from *Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita* (*chapter II, Sloka No. 70*), which describes the mental state of a *Jivan-Mukta*: "As into the ocean, brimful and still, flow the waters, even so does the *Muni* (one who has attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi) into whom enter all desires, he, and not the desirer of desires, attain to peace." A little elucidation of this quotation will not be out of place to make its meaning clear. After the attainment of Nirvikalpa Samadhi when the mind of the *Jivan-Mukta* comes down to the plane of relative-consciousness and begins to work the body and the senses, he retains the purified ego. He lives in the body as a witness only with the major portion of his mind fixed in Brahman or Atman, and performing duties without the notion of "I" and "Mine". While alive, his mind and senses do come into contact with sense-objects and produce desires; but there is no reaction of these desires on his mind, because he is not, in fact, a desirer of desires. The desires come and go without producing any reaction on his mind just as innumerable rivers continuously pouring their waters into an ocean leave the ocean unaffected. It ever remains the same, unruffled and ever full. Such desires have no binding force. Truly speaking these should not be called desires. Appear as desires they do but they are quite unlike the desires of a worldy man. The ashes of a burnt rope appear as rope but these cannot be used for binding. Such is the difference between the desires of an Enlightened man and those of an ordinary mortal. The desires of a *Jivan-Mukta* take the form of the ashes of a burnt rope. His senses do come into contact with the sense-objects and they do represent the objects to the mind but his desires and thoughts get burnt to ashes by the fire of True Knowledge and, as such, they have no binding force on him since they produce no reactions whatsoever.

Before the attainment of this highest Samadhi, desires must be controlled by stages, viz., firstly, one must abstain from acts, secondly from words, thirdly from thought and lastly from the very act of desiring. For, as has already been said, a desire is the cause of a thought and from a thought proceeds a word and thence comes an act. Again, a desire and thought of a mild nature can be easily checked and controlled, and it may not even develop into a word or deed. A desire and thought of a middling kind makes one express his thought in the form of speech or delayed action. But a strong desire and thought forces one to speak and act with vehemence. The impression left in the mind and Chitta originally by a mere desire and thought is mild. But when that desire and thought is given expression to in the form of speech the impression becomes stronger and deeper. And, when that very desire and thought develops into action, the same impression becomes very strong, indeed. Such an impression cannot be easily eradicated and most often the very same desires and thoughts creep up in the mind and drag one to action almost involuntarily. It is, therefore, necessary to take precautions to nip the malady in the bud. The following suggestions if closely observed and diligently applied will prove immensely helpful :—

1. When a desire arises in the mind, try to remain indifferent to it. Do not mind it; do not care for it; do not pay any attention to it. Let it come and go unceremoniously. At

the same time do not tax the mind and do not get worried and irritated. If you would become a desirer of desires, they would catch hold of you and make you dance like a puppet.

2. Persons who practise Jap, meditation and concentration, and those who have attained *Pratyahara* (who can control the mind and fix it to one place or object at will) are men of great will-power. They can curb and restrain their desires and thoughts at will. With such people only two words, yes or no, predominate. They command their mind and the senses and the latter obey almost implicitly. If they wish to brush aside a desire, they simply say to it: "get out" and there it goes. Then they at once change the trend of their thoughts and fix the mind on the object of their meditation. It is thus that they avoid reaction in the mind about unwanted desires and their fascinating objects.

3. When a strong desire creeps up in the mind, make use of your discriminative faculty. Cut it into pieces, so to say, and see its ins and outs and the gain and loss resultant from its fulfilment. Try to annihilate or overcome an evil desire in this way. Exercise your will-power also. Give no soft corner to such a desire. Say a stern 'no' to it. When this method is adopted

persistently without putting the desire and thought into action, one's will-power grows stronger and stronger. Besides, the same desire and thought may appear again and again, and when it is mercilessly thrashed every time it appears, its binding force is sure to become weaker and weaker, till, in the long run, it is easily neglected and over-looked.

4. Have a definite aim in life and stick to it at all costs. Always keep in mind the sanctity of human life and its four-fold aim, viz., *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha* (virtuous life or righteousness, accumulation of wealth through fair means, lawful enjoyments according to the injunctions of the Scriptures and, lastly, attainment of Freedom or Moksha). In other words, let your life stand firmly upon the bed-rock of Dharma (righteousness). Being rooted firmly in Dharma, accumulate wealth to your heart's content. No unfair means or underhand nefarious practices are to be dreamt of even. Then again, following Dharma you should enjoy wealth and life lawfully according to the injunctions of the Scriptures. That is to say you should not be selfish and reckless in your enjoyments nor become a slave of the mind and the senses. Instead, always exer-

cise control over them. You must be kind, gentle and charitable in thought, word and deed to all living beings. Thus leading a well-regulated and self-disciplined life, your aim and goal must be to attain Moksha (freedom). If this four-fold aim of life is always kept in view, evil desires, thoughts and acts can be checked and controlled quite easily.

5. When an evil desire and thought arises in the mind, try to summon and bring up the corresponding good desire and thought to overcome the evil one.

6. You cannot extinguish live fire by pouring over it petrol or kerosene oil. These only fan the flame and increase the fire by leaps and bounds. Likewise, you can never extinguish your desires through the enjoyment of desired objects. In enjoying one desired object, you give rise to hundreds of new desires connected with that one act which gives you only momentary pleasure. The after-effect is everlasting pain and misery. It is by curbing and controlling all desires that you can gain Peace and Bliss. Repress, restrain and check them before they become too strong or else you will be thrown into eternal perdition.

7. Replace impure and improper desires by pure and proper ones. Let virtuous desires take the place of vicious ones. When you succeed in this, make one desire (the desire to attain Samadhi) supreme so that it may predominate over all others. When you succeed in this also, you should go beyond this and try to become perfectly desireless. This is nothing but the attainment of Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

8. The desire for God-realization is not a desire so-called because it entails the inhibition of all other desires. With this desire for God-realization becoming very strong, all other desires disappear from the mind. But to gain it, self-restraint, self-discipline, renunciation, and observance of strict Brahmacharya in thought, word and deed are absolutely essential.

9. Discriminate between the Real and the unreal. Renounce the unreal and stick to the Real. The Real thing is Brahman. That is the Ultimate Truth; all else is false. Stick to Brahman and discard all mundane things. Always remember God. Take His Holy Name constantly. Let His Name be taken with every ingoing and outgoing breath. Let the Name of God vibrate in the mind and Chitta (mind-stuff). Let the love of God and the

desire to commune with Him fill your whole mind and Chitta. Let this *Vritti* vibrate even in your sleep. If, by regular, systematic and hard struggle you are able to sustain this strong desire (*Vritti or Samskara*) in the mind and Chitta, all other desires will grow very weak, and, even if they appear, they would not disturb the tranquility and bliss of your mind. As has been already said, it is the past impressions of desires, thoughts and acts which are the cause of our present desires, thoughts and acts. And if we create a strong and powerful desire now, it would predominate over all past ones. We can even go beyond this one desire and attain Samadhi and enjoy Eternal Peace and Bliss. This is one of the main objectives of Mantra-Jap which is decidedly one of the easiest and most efficacious methods for conquering and eradicating all desires for the attainment of the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

13

MEDITATION

Ordinarily meditation means deep thought and serious contemplation and revolving things in the mind. But in the spiritual realm meditation connotes serious thinking about and constant living in one's Ishta-Devata and Ishta-Mantra (God and Its Name) and diving deep into the Ishta-Devata's Divine qualities. As has been said, the mind is a subtle thing without any form and colour of its own. But it takes the form and colour of the thought-object. The mind of an average man cannot conceive of God without the aid of a name and form. And the form may be gross or subtle. When one constantly takes the Divine Name (Mantra) and lives in the Divine Form, one's mind takes after that Form of God, and casts away all past impure and sinful desires and thoughts. Meditation is the key to the purity of the mind and the heart. Without meditation no Knowledge and no Wisdom is possible. When we seriously think and meditate upon

God, His might and glories, the mind begins constantly to live in those high, noble and sublime ideas and get metamorphosed slowly but surely till in the long run those very noble and sublime ideas manifest themselves in it. Contrarily, an ordinary mind living constantly in low, mundane things of the senses becomes impure, weak and sinful. In short, rise and fall of a man depends entirely upon his own desires and thoughts.

Meditation is of two kinds, viz., Saguna (with form) and Nirguna (without form). Saguna meditation means contemplation in one's own heart-centre on the Form of one's Ishta-Devata (the Deity that one likes and loves the most), and Its Divine qualities. Nirguna meditation is contemplation on the Formless Aspect of Brahman. It is easier and safer for an ordinary man to meditate upon the Saguna Aspect of God, because he cannot contemplate without the aid of a name and a form. The Formless Aspect of God is very difficult to comprehend and much more difficult to contemplate upon. It can be conceived, understood and realized in Nirvikalpa Samadhi only. In this state alone does pure Adwaita (absolute monism) prevail. Apart from this state, life means perception of Dwaita (duality). An impure mind can think of the Supreme Reality only with the aid of a name and a form.

How to Meditate on Form: The Guru selects the Ishta-Devata and the Ishta-Mantra for a disciple according to the latter's taste and tendency. Those who have not yet found a Guru should consult an astrologer for their Ishta-Devata and Ishta-Mantra by giving him the name of the planet and the sign of the Zodiac at the time of their birth. In some cases, one automatically utters the name of a god or goddess, i.e., one's Ishta-Devata when in severe pain and agony. This name creeps up from the Chitta (unconscious plane of the mind or mind-stuff) as a result of past Samskaras (past impressions), i.e., the god or goddess one worshipped in the past birth, impressions of which still exist in the unconscious plane of the mind. Otherwise, one should choose a great man, Incarnation of God, Messiah, Prophet or Saint that one likes, loves and adores as the one possessing Divine qualities. If, however one has ever enjoyed beautiful dreams of gods, goddesses, angels and Saints, etc., one should select any such figure as the object of one's meditation.

Taking for granted that you have selected your Ishta-Devata and Ishta-Mantra and want to practise meditation, proceed as under: Sit erect and observe all the rules as given in the chapter on "Asana". Worship your Guru and Ishta-Devata in the heart-centre, and fill your mind with this idea: "Brahman the Supreme Reality is Formless but, at the same time, It can take numerous Forms also. Brahman is bigger than the biggest object and smaller than the smallest. Brahman is everywhere and in everything. It is Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute). The same Infinite and Eternal Brahman, is in the form of my Ishta-Devata and my Ishta-Devata is my Atman (Self) in the heart-centre." Imagine and perceive that your Ishta-Devata is actually in the heart-centre seated on a full-blown Lotus of eight petals, with a radiant body, smiling face and shining with silvery Divine Light. Now, select some of the good qualities that you want to develop in you to root out the evil ones. Let these be, truthfulness, Brahmacharya (celibacy), pure love, charity, unselfishness, strength, good health, character, purity, contentment, etc. Meditate on them with all your heart and all your spirit. As an example, let us suppose that you have selected "Rama" as your Ishta-Devata and "Jai Rama" as your Ishta-Mantra. Your meditation should be as follows:

Sri Rama is Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman -
Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is All-pervading Brahman - Jai Rama,
Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is All-powerful and Lord of the
Universe - Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is All-round purity and perfection -
Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the ocean of kindness and mercy-
Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the Cause of all causes - Jai Rama,
Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the Life of all lives - Jai Rama,
Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is my very Atman - Jai Rama,
Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the very embodiment of Truth
and Truthfulness - Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the very embodiment of Brahmacharya - Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the very embodiment of pure love
- Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,

Sri Rama is the very embodiment of Charity-
Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the very embodiment of unselfishness - Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the very embodiment of Strength-
Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the very embodiment of good health - Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the very embodiment of character
- Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama,
Sri Rama is the very embodiment of contentment - Jai Rama, Jai Rama, Jai Rama.

This is how you should carry on meditation. While meditating, forget the whole world, your environments and even your body. Begin as stated, complete the round and then begin anew. Likewise, meditate from half an hour to three hours at a stretch. Start the practice with fifteen to thirty minutes and then slowly but steadily increase the time. If you want speedy results you must sit down for meditation four-times a day, viz., morning, midday, evening and mid-night. And apart from these sitting hours, your mind must be kept fully and constantly engaged in thinking of your Ishta-Devata and the Ishta-Mantra. Carry on in such a way that, in due course, all your acts such as eating, drinking, walking, talking, sitting, sleeping, etc., become a sort of worship. Nay! even your very heart-beats must become a sort of worship. When this happens and Divine Consciousness awakens, you will enjoy real Peace, Bliss and Heaven, in this very body and on this very earth. But to establish oneself in this idea is not at all easy. The mind, senses and the ego deceive a Sadhaka (spiritual aspirant) in a variety of ways. By their very nature they go astray. They are always on the look out for loopholes to drag a man down. So, one must be very alert and take necessary precautions. A Sadhaka must have infinite patience and perseverance. He should never get dejected in spite of pit-falls and failures. Failures there will always be. Only he should never commit a wrong knowingly. He should carry on with his work with courage, strength, faith, hope and in all sincerity and he must succeed ere long.

Difficulties In Meditation: For purposes of meditation, the mind must be trained a good deal. A lot of weeding shall have to be done. There must be constant vigil and watch. The senses must be brought under subjection and regulated. The wandering mind must be controlled and brought to a standstill, as it were, to be fixed on one point. It is regular and systematic spiritual work that makes the wandering tendency of the mind lesser and lesser. It is the desires that make the mind impure and impurity, in its turn, causes restlessness. To ensure purity of the mind, therefore, all desires have to be eradicated.

To begin with, the mind would wander restlessly. It would jump from place to place and from object to object. Innumerable desires and thoughts would rise up one after another like waves in an ocean. Even evil and wicked thoughts, such as one has never dreamt of in one's whole life would creep up in the mind during meditation. These things do happen, and one must be prepared to face these difficulties and obstacles in the initial stages. The mind gets into a terrible state. Many Sadhakas get afraid. They are full of fears for themselves. And in utter desperation they leave off work and give up all effort. It is a sad mistake and entails great injury. Many even put the questions: "Why does the mind wander like this? Why do evil, wicked and vulgar thoughts arise during meditation?" There is a sound reason for these happenings. Take a cup of dirty water and let the water stand in it undisturbed for an hour or so. The sediments will sink down and settle at the bottom of the cup and the water-surface would look comparatively clear. Now put your finger into the water and stir it. The water becomes dirty again. But if you strain the water through a piece of cloth a number of times and let it stand, there will be no impurities seen at the bottom and even when you stir it again. This is an apt illustration in which the water can be compared to the mind, the surface of the water that appears clear to the conscious plane of the mind, the impure water to the innumerable Samskaras of the mind, the sediments that settle down at the bottom of the cup to Chitta (mind-stuff) and meditation to the process of stirring and straining the water. Ordinarily, a man knows and judges his mind from its conscious plane because he is not aware of the things that exist in the subconscious and unconscious planes of his mind. The major portion of one's experiences of present life and of aeons and aeons of past births remain in the Chitta (mind-stuff) in their causal forms. Every deep thinking is an attempt to reach and then to search in the unconscious plane of the mind. Meditation is just like stirring the cup of water, as a result of which the sediments that lie at the bottom are made to rise up. Thus, it is that innumerable past desires and thoughts, good or sinful and wicked, that are lying dormant in their causal states spring up and begin to float in the conscious plane during the time of meditation. It is upto a Sadhaka to remove the dirt and impurities of his mind and Chitta by regular and systematic Sadhana, Mantra-Jap, Tap (meditation), discrimination and dispassion to mundane things. When all these desires are removed the mind becomes calm and quiet, and one attains the state of Yoga. It is by constant and systematic meditation, therefore, that one can purify the mind and Chitta. The regaining of this purity is indicated and marked by steady wisdom, one-pointedness and subtleness of the mind.

Thus, it is not easy to meditate in the beginning. The mind oscilates, one feels tired and meditation becomes insipid. But infinite patience and perseverance is the price of progress and success. There are other difficulties also. Often a novice finds it difficult to visualise his Ishta-Devata at the heart-centre. He must take the aid of an image, picture or photo of the Ishta-Devata and keep it in front at the time of Jap and meditation and try to concentrate his mind on that. The picture or the image is not to be thought of as a mere picture or image. It should be regarded as the very form of one's Ishta-Devata standing face to face. One should have infinite faith. Real faith can work miracles and helps concentration of the mind. After taking this external aid for sometime and regularly practising meditation (progress fully depends upon sincere and right effort) one may start meditating internally. At this stage, one should slowly close one's eyes and try to produce the image of the external picture of one's Ishta-Devata at the heart-centre. It is the surest method of success in one's efforts to meditate on one's Ishta-Devata internally or mentally.

When this difficulty is overcome, some others crop up. Some can easily meditate on the heart-centre, while others find it very difficult to do so. They should, therefore, learn to fix the mind on the crown of the head, i.e., the brain-centre, or inbetween the eye-brows, or in the Manipura Chakra (in the region of the navel) or in the Muladhara

Chakra (the place where the urethra canal and the anus meet). The right selection can easily be made by everyone for himself after a little hard work or in consultation with his Guru (spiritual teacher).

After the right Guru has been chosen one should stick to Him, come what may. One should never choose a Guru suddenly. One must study the Guru well before accepting him and the Guru should also study the disciple. Then, after mutual study, if both are satisfied, the connnection should be established and initiation solemnised. Hasty acceptance of any man as a Guru will blast one's whole spiritual career and end it in doubt, failure and utter disaster. The Mantra or the Ishta-Devata should never be changed except with the consent of the Guru. When once a particular part of the body has been chosen as the centre of meditation and when a certain path has been chalked out for work, no change whatsoever should be made in them. As in digging a well to get water, one has to dig at one place, all the time, so it is with meditation or Sadhana. If one digs some six feet at one place and then shifts and digs twelve feet in another place and so on and so forth, one can never succeed in completing the well and in getting water. The same is true of Sadhana, if one goes on changing Guru, Mantra, Ishta-Devata and the mode of work. The fickle mind plays tricks and deceives. It would not by its very nature, stick to any one particular Sadhana. It is enamoured of change. When one starts Mantra-Jap and meditation, it appears interesting and joyful in the beginning. But after some days, it becomes very monotonous, particularly during the period of reaction. It is a time fraught with serious consequences. Many give up work (Sadhana) altogether or take up some new path and new practices. Spiritual growth remains stranded, as it were, with these people and they generally degenerate. For, during the time of action the mind works well, physical health remains normal, environments are favourable and everything looks very pleasing and congenial. Weak and wicked propensities of the mind then remain suppressed and a man feels that he is progressing fast and that the attainment of Samadhi is only a matter of days. But then sets in reaction during which time physical health becomes subnormal, Jap and Tap appear insipid and the suppressed evil and wicked propensities of the mind assume an upper hand.

If a Sadhaka is careless during this period and if he does not carry on his daily routine scrupulously he is sure to have a great fall. It is only through regular and systematic work and faith, patience and perseverance that this period can be successfully tided over, dangers and pit-falls avoided. In some cases the reaction comes often and lasts for a day or two each time. In other cases it comes occasionally but virulently and lasts for days together. It is the time for extreme carefulness and watchfulness. The best way to tide over this period is to live in the company of one's Guru; but if that be not possible, one should move in the company of holy and pious people, and observe light fasts with prayer.

Imagine that you have selected the Guru, Ishta - Devata, Ishta - Mantra and the place of meditation and that you have been continuously, regularly and systematically carrying on with your Sadhana. During Sadhana, if you succeed in fixing the mind at will to any one place or to the place of your meditation and are able to hold it at that particular place at least for a few seconds, you have certainly made good progress. This state of fixing the mind to one place and holding it at that particular place for a few seconds is called Pratyahara in Raja-Yoga. But even after gaining Pratyahara, the goal is far off. You have still to work hard to come to meditation. During meditation you would notice the mind wandering from place to place and from object to object. Your lips would be repeating the Mantra but a major portion of your mind would be living in some external fascinating object. One thought would arise and your mind would live in it for some time; then immediately another thought would spring up and the old one would disappear, and so on and so forth. Numerous thoughts would creep up and disappear, but you should not get disturbed. Do not worry and do not strain the mind in tusselling with these desires and thoughts. To meet this situation, do as under :

1. Go on with your Mantra-Jap and meditation. Let the desires come and go unceremoniously. Do not heed them. Do not pay any attention to them. Remain indifferent to them. But every now and then do drag the mind and put it at the feet of your Ishta-Devata.

2. Let the thoughts come and go. When a thought comes into the conscious plane, allow the mind to live in that one thought fully

with yourself as a witness. After a close watch you will see that the mind does not like to live in that one single thought and its object. It wants to leave that off and enter another. When it is about to run away to another thought give it a pull, as it were, and try to divert it to the place and object of your meditation. If you apply this method regularly and constantly, the wandering tendency of the mind would grow lesser and lesser in due course and the mind would become pure, subtle and one-pointed.

3. When a thought enters the mind during the time of meditation, try to drive it away. Say to it: "you fool, get you gone." Repeat your Mantra vigorously and quickly, so that it alone vibrates in the mind and Chitta. This method can be used by an advanced Sadhaka alone and not by all.

4. The easiest method to gain meditation and concentration is i. to engage the mind in Mantra-Jap constantly and ii. to think of one's Ishta-Devata, to feel His presence, to remember Him, to surrender unto Him one's mind, body and everything and to make every act a sort of worship, or an offering always and at all times. If this is done, the mind and the

Chitta Vrittis will receive only one strong impression or Samskara of God remembrance. External thoughts will not then disturb such a man during the time of meditation and he will be able to enjoy real concentration.

5. Use discrimination. When a thought comes, try to analyse it and see its ins and outs. Do not show any soft corner to it, be merciless to it. Judge what is Real and what is unreal. Stick to the Real and discard the unreal. If you do this sincerely and constantly the wandering tendency of the mind will disappear before long. When this method is adopted the binding force of the thought even if it appears in the mind repeatedly, would grow less and less till it totally disappears.

14

MEDITATION ON "OM"

1st Process: Meditation on "OM" or the Formless Aspect of Brahman (Nirguna meditation): First put to yourself the question, who am I? And then answer it as follows:

I am not this physical body- Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am not the senses - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am not the sense-objects - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am not the mind - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am not the will - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am not the ego - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am not the intellect - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am not even the Prana - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
No. I am none of these things. I am Sat-Chit-Ananda (Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Absolute) Brahman, One without a second -
Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am Brahma (the Creator) and His Shakti
(Power) - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am Vishnu (the Sustainer) and His Shakti -
Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,

I am Shiva (the Destroyer) and His Shakti -
Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am the God of gods - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am the Lord of lords - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am the Light of lights - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am the Power of powers-Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am the Supreme Purusothama (Supreme God)
the Eternal - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,

I have no birth - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no growth - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no decay - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no disease - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no death - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no sex - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no caste - Om, Om, Om; Om, Om,
I have no creed - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no colour - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no fear - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no lust - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no anger - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no greed - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no infatuation - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no pride - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no hatred - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no delusion - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I have no wants - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,

I have no weakness - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am ever pure, ever full (Purna) and I am the Supreme Brahman, One without a second -
Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
Sword cannot cut me - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
Wind cannot dry me - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
Water cannot wet me - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
Fire cannot burn me - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am unborn - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am Immortal - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am changeless and unchangeable- Om, Om, Om,
I am Eternal and Infinite- Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
I am Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman, One without a second - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om.

After taking a steady posture (seat), repeat this formula again and again from beginning to end in full faith (*Shraddha*) and with intense *Bhava* (feeling). When you utter every sentence, feel that your whole body and mind is full of that Divine quality. Feel thus constantly. Utter the Mantra in full faith, and with deep and firm conviction. Feel whole heartedly that you are not the filthy body and the senses but the Eternal, Infinite Spirit. Apart from the sitting hours (meditation times) keep this formula and the Mantra in mind while doing daily work of all kinds. The purpose is to hold the mind in Spirit or Brahman at all times and to impress it strongly with the futility of the evanescent sense-pleasures and their objects. This will remove all weaknesses, sense-attractions, attachment to the body and delusions.

2nd Process: Widen the range of your mind by thoughts like these:

I am the Supreme Brahman-Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
Brahman is All-pervading, without beginning and without end - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
Millions and billions of worlds like this are only a speck in Infinity (Brahman). Millions and billions of worlds like this rise up and tumble down to pieces in Infinity, every second like bubbles in the vast ocean. What about this world then? What is its value when compared to Infinity? When this world itself has no significance in Infinity, what about the so-called riches of this world and the worldly objects? What about this body, the mind and the senses? What value have they when compared to Infinity? These are all transitory, momentary and false. I am none of these things. I am Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman, One without a second- Om, Om, Om, Om, Om,
When I am that Supreme Brahman, how can

low, vulgar and ephemeral things of the world and senses attract me, charm me and misguide me ? Nothing can make me weak. Nothing can misguide me. Nothing can drag me down. There is no delusion and there is no bondage for me. I am the Supreme Spirit. I am Sat-Chit-Ananda Brahman, One without a second - Om, Om, Om, Om, Om. Carry on with discriminatian and expansion of the mind in this way. Repeat the formula again and again with all force and in all faith. It will help very much in creating in you dispassion for the ephemeral things of the world, leading to the attainment of Brahma-Jnana through Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

3rd Process: Sit erect in any Asana on an elevated place, from where you can see freely the vast sky, or the vast expanse of sea-water. Let there be no obstruction in the way. Thus seated, expand the vision of your mind by looking at the vast sky or the vast expanse of sea-water. Think firmly that the Supreme Brahman which is your own Atman (Self) is All-pervading and everywhere like the ocean in front or the sky above. Think firmly that there is only One Thing behind all names and forms of this universe and that One Thing which is your very Atman is Eternal, Infinite, birthless, growthless, decayless, deathless, sexless, changeless and ever the same. Think firmly again and again that there is nothing in the universe apart from Brahman, which is your own Self. Impress the mind with this idea again and again and try to forget the body idea. Do not think of your weaknesses, drawbacks and failures. Have high hopes, keep high and noble ideas and ideals before you and always live in strength-giving thoughts. If this process is followed regularly, you can easily acquire strength of mind, strength of will-power and real dispassion to the mundane things to help you to gain Samadhi and Moksha (Freedom). While expanding the mind thus keep on uttering-

Om, Om, Om, Om, Om.

These are some of the methods for meditation on Nirguna Aspect (Formless Aspect of God or Brahman) of Brahman. But only very few are fit to take these up with success. In this process of meditation, the first and foremost thing needed is a very sharp intellect to gain which one must observe strict Brahmacharya (celibacy) in thought, word and deed. To be a real Brahmachari one must live a simple, pure life, follow the moral or ethical code of conduct in its entirety and exercise control over all the five senses. A moral wreck may become a great lawyer or a great politician but he can never dream of making even an inch of progress spiritually nor can he ever control his mind and senses and attain Samadhi. In fact, the very foundation of religion or spirituality rests entirely upon the bed-rock of morality and Brahmacharya. For, Brahmacharya is life and its loss is death. Control of all the senses and control of the mind always go together, hand in hand as do the control of the mind, control of sex-energy and control of Prana also. And without attaining perfection in these three, Samadhi is impossible. A man who has no control over his senses and mind and who has not overcome the ego (body idea) can never become a Jnani and he is quite unfit to take up meditation on the *Nirakara* (Formles) Aspect of God. If a man unripe for such meditation, takes to it, he will not make any headway spiritually but will, on the contrary, degrade himself. For, mere speculative philosophy cannot make a man a real philosopher (Brahma-Jnani).

15

CONCENTRATION

Cognition, emotion and volition must be unified in order to bring out all the latent possibilities of mind that lie dormant in an individual. Practice of concentration is therefore, the very kernal of religious evolution. Without proper concentration it is not possible to attain Samadhi and Emancipation. All aesthetic, artistic, poetic, literary and other joys come from concentration of the mind. Even in sorrow and misery does the mind get concentrated. And the intensity of joy or sorrow depends solely upon the intensity of concentration. In performing experiments in a scientific laboratory or making observations in astronomical observatory, the mind automatically gets concentrated and all its latent powers get manifested. Concentration integrates and unifies all the scattered forces of the mind into one predominating and all-possessing idea and thought. Real and perfect concentration is Yoga. There is no limit to the powers of the human mind as revealed by concentration which consists in focusing all the powers of the mind on one point. When one gains perfect concentration, one gains all knowledge as a matter of course. To such a man Nature reveals Her secret.

Real happiness results from right concentration. Concentration is strength; it is bliss. It purifies the body and controls the senses and the mind which become calm and collected, and gain peace and purity. In deep concentration, the ideas of time and space vanish. A man transcends the ideas of pain and pleasure and becomes unconscious of his body and his environments. Even the past and the present become one for him. These facts constitute a test for real and deep concentration which comes from curbing and calming the emotions, and controlling and harnessing the bubbling desires and thoughts.

Broadly speaking, we can divide concentration into two main groups, viz., INVOLUNTARY and VOLUNTARY or AUTOMATIC and AT WILL. Automatic concentration of the mind is found developed in every living being. It takes place in sense-enjoyments and under the strong impulse of emotions. In eating and drinking, and under the impulse of lust, anger, greed, infatuation, pride, and hatred, etc., as also in love, joy and sorrow, etc., the mind gets concentrated automatically. It is much more developed in animals, birds, reptiles and insects than in man. The lower the creature, more is its attachment to sense-enjoyments. When the lower creatures are hungry they do anything and everything to satisfy their hunger even by running great risks. No danger can then daunt them. During the mating season, they go almost mad and forget not only food and drink but also danger to their lives. We can see tiny insects and butterflies sticking to one another for hours and days together during the mating season. Their minds get completely absorbed in sexual-enjoyments. The same is true of animals though in a lesser degree. Coming to man, we find instances where he has run mad and has even committed murder or suicide under the impulse of love, lust, anger, etc. When the love of the lover for his beloved is very strong and something interferes and frustrates the free display of lust between them or when they are separated by death or otherwise, instances are not wanting when either (or even both of them) has gone mad or committed which consists in focusing all the powers of the mind on one point. When one gains perfect concentration, one gains all knowledge as a matter of course. To such a man Nature reveals Her secret.

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A young Christian university student was in intense love with a Christian girl. The young man was a bright student and had won a Government of India scholarship in 1927 for higher studies in England. It was agreed that the boy would marry the girl on his return, i.e., after completing his studies. But the boy's attachment to the girl was so intense that he would hardly forget her or live away from her. But his parents did not know of it and made arrangements for his trip to England. The boy reached Bombay to take ship for England. But on reaching Bombay, he went mad and the trip had to be cancelled. The boy thus lost chance of higher studies. But the girl changed her mind, betrayed the boy and married another man.

In 1950 a poor clerk got about three lakhs of rupees from a lottery. This proved too much for him. When he received the cheque he went on laughing and laughing. He could hardly control his joy so much so that he forgot himself and went semi-mad, climbed to the top of a three storied house, jumped down and killed himself.

In deep sorrows and sudden misfortunes also there are many instances where people have died suddenly of heart-failure, have committed suicide, or have gone mad. In all these cases there is automatic-concentration of the mind. The emotions being too strong make a man quite helpless to control the mind or to forget the incident or to change the trend of thought. However, if a man or woman learns how to control the mind *at will*, he or she can easily overcome these calamities and forget the incidents or take them lightly. As it is, instead of controlling the emotions, man is overpowered by the emotions which make him quite helpless and very miserable. Even if he wants to change the trend of his thoughts and forget the incident, he cannot do it, as he has not learnt how to control the mind. On the other hand, the incident haunts the man wherever he goes and makes him so miserable that he either goes mad or is led to commit suicide. The man who has learnt mind-control can, however, suppress emotions of all kinds at all stages to keep his mind in perfect equilibrium. This is the greatest boon a man can ever have.

Mind-control at will is not developed and, therefore, not possible in lower forms of life.

It is possible only in human beings. The mind of an average man easily gets concentrated in a variety of external objects, such as a beautiful scenery, a cinema show, a drama, a game, a zoological garden, etc., if he has a little taste for such things. The mind of an ordinary man also gets concentrated in hearing stories and in gossip. But concentration of this sort does not give him peace of mind. A man of literary taste enjoys reading good books, good literature, newspapers, novels and even devotional books and Scriptures. His mind gets concentrated on the variety of subjects that he reads and understands. There are people who cannot live without reading novels, newspapers, literature or Scriptures. There are some who devote eight to ten hours every day in reading and when they read they almost forget the world and their environments. But, the minds of all these people still remain fickle and unsteady. They are always restless and enjoy no peace of mind. They are much better, no doubt, than ordinary individuals who have little of deep concentration like theirs, but, with all that, they are no nearer what may be called real concentration, the mother of Peace and Bliss. The vast majority of educated people, belong to this category.

They are also prone to fall an easy prey to all emotional feelings, such as love, lust, anger, etc. A higher form of concentration consists in concentrating the mind on *one* subject at will. This requires further training of the mind. All educated people are not capable of doing this successfully. The man who succeeds in this kind of concentration wins name and fame in science or literature or poetry, etc. A still higher kind of concentration is to concentrate the mind on a set of objects or ideas and to meditate upon them continuously. This kind of concentration is more difficult and requires hard work and training. We have already mentioned in a previous chapter that if a man can withdraw his mind at will from all external objects, and hold it on at one place, it is called *Pratyahara* in Yoga. And if it is further concentrated at will on a point so as to be held on to that one point for at least twelve seconds, it is called *Dharana* in Yoga. This is the highest form of concentration which many people miss even after spending several years in Jap and meditation. Generally, their minds get concentrated on a set of ideas and do not go beyond.

The author was once explaining this point to a Director of Education (retired) who was a spiritual aspirant. In the course of talk the officer said that he had good concentration of mind. On one occasion he was reading Scriptures and was so much absorbed in study that he did not hear the call bell for the afternoon tea. After finishing reading, he enquired about the tea-bell and was told that it had gone more than half an hour ago and that they had already finished with their tea. He narrated this incidence in support of his claim. The author told him that the mind got concentrated on a set of ideas and that many possessed that sort of concentration; but to proceed further and to concentrate the mind on one point and to hold it on that one point even for a few seconds was very very difficult. It was really a great attainment to succeed in that kind of concentration. If one could hold the mind on one point, forgetting everything, and if that concentration continued even for twelve seconds, one could enjoy peace and joy the whole day long. Anyway, the officer was not convinced of this but promised to watch his mind closely during the time of meditation or concentration and then let the author know.

He continued his Sadhana (spiritual practice) for more than a month, watched his mind very closely and carefully, and at last detected that his mind could hardly stick to one point even for two seconds.

Thus, concentration of the mind on one point (*Dhyana*) is very difficult to attain. It requires a lot of work. There must be regular and systematic spiritual practice. The mind wanders on account of its impurity. Desires cause this impurity. And desires are always for the objects of the senses and their enjoyments. Certain methods have already been prescribed for the purification of the mind. Only when the mind becomes pure does it become steady, subtle and one-pointed and gets concentrated easily. Mantra-Jap is one of these methods. When Mantra-Jap is constantly and sincerely carried on for long, the mind along with Chitta (mind-stuff) gets transformed and instead of multifarious desires and thoughts arising in it – it gets filled with the Mantra and its meaning. When one reaches that stage, it becomes easy to attain Dharana and Dhyana. In Mantra-Jap, the mind gets concentrated first on the mental image and meaning of the Mantra. In that state, the uttering of the

Mantra automatically stops and the mind carries on with the meaning and the mental image. The mind should then be allowed to live in the subtle object and concentration continued. If this point is well understood and concentration is continued further, it would take one to Dhyana and Samadhi.

Certain formulas for meditation have already been given in previous chapter. When meditation is practised regularly and systematically for long, the mind gives up its old Samskaras (impressions) and some new and good Samskaras come to take their place and predominate in the career of the aspirant. With this purity the mind gets concentrated easily. While meditating vigorously on the form of the Ishta-Devata and Its Divine qualities, all the different thoughts converge in the person of the Ishta-Devata, and the mind comes to live in the subtle form of the Ishta-Devata. It is here that one should be careful and watchful not to break or give up concentration. Rather, one must continue it further. The mind should be held continuously on the mental image of the Ishta-Devata, the body, environments and all other things (except the Ishta-Devata) should. be forgotten entirely and the mind merged completely in the form of the Ishta-Devata. If this concentration is carried on further it would surely lead one to Dhyana and Samadhi.

In a previous chapter we have also given formulas for meditation on "Om", i.e., on the Formless Aspect of God (Nirguna Brahman). When meditation on "Om" is carried on constantly and regularly, the past Samskaras grow dimmer and dimmer and let the mind become pure along with the body and the Nadis (nerves). When this threefold purity is gained, concentration becomes easy. During the time of meditation all the different objects or points of meditation integrate and unify in one common object, viz., Brahman. Then the whole mind and Chitta begin to vibrate with *Brahmakara Vritti*, i.e., thought of Brahman. It is then that the mind lives constantly in the thought of Brahman or, in other words, one lives in Brahman. When the mind gets concentrated in the thought of Brahman, the purity and one-pointedness of the mind makes the Kundalini Shakti ascend to higher Chakras (centres), and when It reaches the heart-centre (Anahata Chakra) one perceives a mental vision of an All-pervading Divine Light (a sort of silvery light) – one should then try to fix the mind in that light till that light comes to a point. The point should scrupulously be kept in view, and concentration continued without break till one's will, ego, mind, intellect, Chitta and the Light itself merge in that one point. Concentration should continue to be carried on even after this state till the light vanishes altogether and the mind merges in the void, a state in which there is neither light nor lightlessness. It is here that the ideas of subject, object and knowledge disappear and, what remains is the Ocean of Consciousness by Itself or In Itself. This transcendental state is known as Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

I. How to Concentrate on Gross Objects:

1. Those who have chosen their Ishta - Devata for meditation, can make use of a picture of the same for the purpose of concentration. Have a beautiful picture of your Ishta-Devata. When you practise Sadhana (spiritual practice) keep this picture in front of you and try to fix your gaze on any part of it, i.e., it may be the face, eyes, legs, or any other part of the body that appeals to you the most. Fix the mind on that particular spot. Do not close the eyes. Even if the eyes water do not close them.

Focus the mind and the eye-sight on that particular spot with all your energy. When you cannot continue the gaze further close the eyes at intervals and then continue the practice again. Do so before and after meditation for five to ten minutes. If this is regularly done, it will steady your mind and you would be able to make steady progress in concentration.

2. Take a beautiful white or red rose. Keep it in front of you and try to fix your eyes and the mind on it as directed above and continue the practice before and after meditation for five to ten minutes.

3. When you meditate, mark a small spot. It may be a black spot or a dot on the white wall in front of you, or a black spot on a sheet of white paper kept in front of you at a distance of four or five feet. Try to fix your eyes and mind on that black spot. Gaze at the dot without closing the eyes as directed above. Continue this practice before and after meditation for five to ten minutes.

4. Take a shining particle of sand or stone and place it in front of your meditation seat at a distance of one yard and try to fix the mind and the eyes on that sand particle. Follow the directions shown in above processes.

When the above anyone of the processes are practised continuously they help meditation and concentration. They make the mind steady.

II. How to Concentrate on Light: 1. Think of a beautiful Lotus of eight petals at the heart-centre. Think of a ball of fire or the rising sun or the word ॐ "Om" full of brilliance in the middle of the Lotus. Try to fix your mind on the image of the ball of fire or the Sun or on ॐ "Om" with effulgent Light and try to forget everything else. Bring the wandering mind again and again to that point and try to fix it there. Carry on this process as long as possible.

2. Take a candle-stick at night, light it and keep it in front of you at a distance of two or three yards while meditating. Let not the light flicker; the flame should be steady. Now try to fix your eyes and the mind on that light. Do not close your eyes even if they water. Practise this for ten to fifteen minutes daily regularly. The wandering tendency of the mind will become lesser and lesser and after sometime you would be able to gain concentration easily.

3. For concentration at night take a bright star or a far off light from a lamp-post. Sit steadily and try to fix the mind and the eyes on it. Keep on gazing as long as possible and

try to forget everything except the light. Concentration on light at night is very profitable, for the eyes easily get fixed on light and the mind also easily gets concentrated because there are no other objects to drag the eyesight and the mind in darkness. Keep on this practice as long as possible. Close the eyes at intervals when they get tired and then begin again with the practice.

4. In an advanced state of meditation and with the rising of Kundalini Shakti to the Anahata Chakra, you can clearly perceive (mental perception) an all-pervading steady silvery light all through your meditation. When you come to this state, catch hold of that light and try to fix your mind on it. When the mind gets concentrated on that light and is allowed to live in that light, the all-pervading light comes to a point, and the mind comes to a focus. If you carry on the concentration, the point will seem to recede further and further and the mind, will, ego, intellect and Chitta converging in that one point will follow it. When this state of concentration deepens, the body idea will begin to melt away and breathing will almost stop. A little further on this state of concentration, the point will disappear and so

will the body idea. The breathing and the heart-beats would automatically stop completely, and the mind would merge in Infinity, i.e., a void, which is neither light nor darkness. In this state, the ideas of subject, object and knowledge disappear completely and one attains and enjoys the Bliss of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. This is the culmination of concentration. In this state, all desires vanish and the mind, Chitta (mind-stuff), will, ego and intellect (Buddhi), all merge into and become one with Brahman. In this Samadhi alone can one realize and understand the Formless Aspect of God or Brahman.

III. How to Concentrate on Sound: 1. If you are living near the sea-shore, or a water-fall or a roaring mountain stream, take the aid of the continuous noise it makes. Sit erect. Close your eyes and try to think of the sound. Forget everything and fix your mind in that one sound. Practise concentration on it as long as possible steadily, regularly and systematically.

2. If you have a clock in the meditation room, catch hold of the tick-tick sound of the clock. Sit erect and try to concentrate and merge your mind in that sound for as long as possible.

3. With the gaining of a little purity of the body, Nadis and the mind, and with the

rising of the Kundalini-currents towards the head-centre, one can hear a variety of sounds (for full particulars please see the author's book: "THE PRIMAL POWER IN MAN OR THE KUNDALINI SHAKTI.") - the last or final sound being that of "Omkara". One can hear this sound continuously all the twenty-four hours. At this stage, try to fix your mind in the sound "Om" constantly. If this is done regularly and systematically the mind easily gets concentrated in that sound. And if this concentration is carried on further, the sound comes to a point and finally merges into Infinity and so do the mind, Chitta, ego, will and intellect and one attains Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

IV. How to Concentrate on Void: Sit erect in your favourite Asana (seat). Thus seated, try not to think of anything. Make the mind void; free it from desires and thoughts of all kinds. Forget the body. Let the mind, will, ego, intellect, Chitta and the senses remain in their respective places. Do not make use of them. Practise this for as long as possible. If you really succeed in holding the mind in this state even for a few seconds, you will understand what real rest and real bliss are. You will also have an idea of the Formless Aspect of Brahman or

God. This practice will also reveal to you the strength of your mind. But this is not an easy thing to accomplish. Purity of the mind is essential. And many may ask this question: "Is it possible to make the mind free from all desires and thoughts?" The answer is an emphatic yes. By steady practice you can accomplish this. You gain this state everyday in deep sleep. What is wanted is to gain it at will. As soon as you get up from a good sleep, sit on the bed itself and carry on with this practice. For, the mind is fresh and strong after a good sleep and you can easily succeed. Sometimes in the course of regular meditation, you come to the state–when the mind gets concentrated on void. You should continue in that state and not break the chain of concentration. If you hold the mind in void for long, it will merge in the void along with ego, and Chitta and you will attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

16

PRANAYAMA

(The subject has been fully dealt with in the author's books: viz., "*The Primal Power in Man or The Kundalini Shakti*", "*The Ideal life and Moksha (Freedom)*", & "*The Secrets of Prana, Pranayama & Yoga-Asanas*". As such, only a gist of the subject will be given in this chapter. Those who wish to practice Pranayama will do well to go through the three books mentioned above).

Pranayama is one of the Yogic methods of controlling the mind and the attainment of Samadhi. Control of mind, control of Prana, control of sex-energy and attainment of Samadhi always go together or hand in hand. One leads to the other almost simultaneously. As a matter of fact, with the attainment of Samadhi the threefold control is complete. In Samadhi (Nirvikalpa Samadhi) the mind and Prana become one or merge in the Supreme Being. Prana is the cause of sex-energy and of breath. It is the vibration of nerve-currents that makes the heart and the lungs work. The dynamo of nerve-currents in an average man is the Muladhara Chakra (anus–centre) and Kundalini Shakti (another name is Prana Shakti) is the cause of nerve-currents. So long as the Kundalini Shakti remains in the lowest centre (Muladhara Chakra), Tamo-Guna predominates in an individual and there is too much of attachment to and hankering after the enjoyment of three main things, *viz.*, food, sleep and sex. In such a case the Kundalini Shakti takes the downward course and the result is sexual-enjoyments. A man or woman in whom the Kundalini Shakti always takes the downward course, lives in a very low ebb of life. In fact, he is in no way better than an animal. Therefore, in order that a man or woman be a human being in the true sense, and in order to know the strength and to gain the purity of the mind and to make use of its higher faculties, he or she must not let the Kundalini Shakti take the downward course. In other words, he or she must observe Brahmacharya. Loss of Brahmacharya connotes great impurity of the mind and constitutes the most potent cause of down–fall in man. Its strict observance is the first and the foremost step towards Divine life and the regaining of the lost Kingdom.

Pranayama is generally known as breath-control. But most people do not understand the secret of its achievement. So long as nerve-currents are working in the body, breath cannot be controlled. The nerves get their supply of currents from the dynamo (Muladhara Chakra) which is being worked by the Kundalini Shakti, the cause of this dynamo. So long as the Kundalini Shakti remains in the Muladhara Chakra and works the dynamo, breathing can never come to a stop because the Shakti is continuously going down and out in the form of sexual-enjoyments. It does not rise up, and so long as It does not rise up, control of Prana (breath-control) is impossible.

Pranayama aims at regular and systematic breathing. It makes the practitioner healthy and enables the nerve-currents to function in a normal way. For, excess or loss of nerve-currents in any part of the body, is the cause of many diseases. Thus, Pranayama brings about the purification of the body, Nadis (nerves) and the mind. When one observes strict Brahmacharya (celibacy) and when the body, Nadis and the mind become pure, the Kundalini Shakti tries to rise up to the higher Chakras. When It enters the Sushumna–Nadi (The working of this Nadi can be compared to wireless activities. This is one of the finest and subtlest of all Nadis. It cannot be seen by any man-made instrument so far, but it can be felt, when the mind becomes pure, subtle and one-pointed.), in Its upward course, the dynamo stops working. With this the Nadis (nerves) are left without nerve-currents and stop work automatically and so do the heart and the lungs, in their turn. And that is how a man carries on without breathing for hours and days together, when he enters Nirvikalpa Samadhi. During Nirvikalpa Samadhi there is automatic *Kumbhaka* in which breathing, blood circulation and even the heart-beats completely stop and one looks like a person dead. Thus, breathing exercises are only an aid to the purification of the body, the Nadis and the mind, which purity facilitates the Kundalini Shakti to enter the Sushumna Nadi and reach Sahasrara and culminates in Samadhi. With only a little practice in Pranayama it is not at all possible to raise the Kundalini Shakti to Sahasrara. It requires regular and very hard practice for long. One must take up the higher forms of Pranayama and practise them four times a day regularly, i.e., morning, mid-day, evening and mid-night. To take up these higher forms of Pranayama without observing perfect Brahmacharya in thought, word and deed is very dangerous and; if done, may cause insanity. Besides the observance of strict Brahmacharya, one must lead a pure and holy life, regulate food and drink and observe all the rules prescribed for a student of Yoga. (Please refer to the three books mentioned above for the rules of Yoga).

17

WORK AND WORSHIP

(The author's book: "*The Ideal Life & Moksha or Freedom*" deals in details with the subject, i. e., "WORK or Karma–Yoga and WORSHIP or Bhakti-Yoga", and, as such only a gist thereof is given in this chapter).

Work and worship or Karma - Yoga and Bhakti–Yoga are two of the various methods adopted to control the mind and to attain Samadhi. The mind, as a whole, has four main faculties, viz., willing, feeling, thinking and gathering (the tendency to concentrate). Though all these four faculties belong to the mind, all of them are not equally developed in an ordinary individual. In the vast majority of people, only one of these faculties predominates over the other three. And influenced by that predominating faculty a man selects the path and makes steady progress by following it strictly; and, in the end, attains the Highest Goal. While selecting the particular path, it is not to be presumed that the other faculties lie dormant in or disappear from the mind. In fact they continue to appear and show themselves active several times in the course of a day. That is why a man feels inclined sometimes to work, sometimes to worship and at other times to sit quiet and meditate and at some others to think silently and deeply. Though Karma-Yoga, Bhakti-Yoga, Raja-Yoga and Jnana-Yoga are the four different paths open to Truth–Seekers to adopt, they are, in fact, not quite different and distinct from one another. A very close watch, will reveal that each blends into the other. None of these can stand alone, i.e., one without the other. In practising anyone of these, one follows the other three automatically. For example, take Karma-Yoga. While practising Karma-Yoga one must be devoted to one's work, must concentrate in work and lastly show discrimination and dispassion to do one's work for work's sake. Likewise, if we take the other three Yogas and study them carefully we shall see that the practice of all the four Yogas really goes side by side, though we may give prominence to any one form and call it accordingly.

Let us now see how one can control the mind and attain Emancipation through work.

Work cannot be avoided by any living being. So long as one lives in this world one has to work even for the sake of bare maintenance. And this work one must do with full concentration of the mind but without attachment to the result thereof. One must work, whole heartedly with one's whole mind, will and heart but one must not hanker after or expect anything in return. One must work like a master–work for work's sake, without expecting anything in return as its fruit. The Idea of "I" and "Mine" must go; instead the idea of "Thou" and "Thine" must take its place. So long as this idea of "I" and "Mine" fills one's mind, one suffers hell-fire. It is the cause of all sins, pains, miseries and human bondage. It is with this very idea that one builds up a mighty empire for one-self in this world. Lust, greed, selfishness, anger, etc., creep up in the mind only on account of this ego idea. So long as this idea is stubborn, one enjoys no happiness and no freedom. Therefore, the first requisite is to obliterate this ego idea.

One has to attend to work of various sorts in life. One must do one's duty honestly without taking recourse to nefarious ways and without hankering after the fruits of the work done. One must never neglect any work, but, at the same time, one should never get attached to any work. One should never shirk from doing any work that comes unsought for; but one should never stop to make a selection and thus make room for the ego to grow. One must boldly face every bit of work that comes of its own accord, without trying to evade it. Work done in the right spirit and with the right understanding, does not bind a man; instead, it elevates him. For, it is the motive that produces undesirable effects and brings on bondage. Every work is a strange mixture of good and bad effects; but, if a man acts without the idea of doership, he is immune from the fruit or the result of the act. It is the desire and anxiety for and expectation of the fruits of action that makes the mind restless and robs it of peace. This anxiety born of egoism, is the cause of fear and bondage. Hence, the ego must be rooted out by proper work.

The man in whom the willing faculty predominates, takes to Karma – Yoga. A Karma-Yogi seeks the aid of his Ishta-Devata and Ishta-Mantra. While doing work of any kind he constantly repeats the Mantra and remembers his Ishta-Devata. By selfless wosk, i,e., turning every work into an act of worship, he constantly lives in the thought of his Ishta-Devata and learns to detach himself from work at will. A Karma-Yogi has to learn to keep his mind in perfect balance under all circumstances – in weal or woe and all the pairs of opposites. He must also be always truthful, honest and sincere. He must observe all the rules of good conduct and observe perfect Brahmacharya. If a householder, he should beget one or two children and no more. For, Brahmacharya is absolutely necessary to gain the strength of the mind, the body and the Nadis and their purity. It is also necessary to understand and to follow the spirit of Dharma and to tread assiduously along the long arduous path of Karma–Yoga. When work is done disinterestedly, i.e., work for work's sake, without hankering after or expectation of the fruits of the act done and with the mind constantly living in the thought of God, the body, the Nadis and the mind get purified. This purity makes the upward movement of Kundalini Shakti to higher planes easy. Besides, the one-pointedness of the mind, Mantra-Jap, constant thought of the welfare of others, restraint of the senses, etc., heat the Kundalini Shakti. And when Its down-ward flow is checked and restrained by the observance of Brahmacharya, It begins to ascend to higher Chakras till It reaches Sahasrara and one attains Samadhi and wins Liberation.

A person in whom the feeling faculty predominates takes to Bhakti-Yoga for Sadhana (spiritual practice). Bhakti means *love* and Yoga means *union*. So, Bhakti-Yoga is the union of the individual Self with the Supreme Self through love. Bhakti-Yoga is not love of every kind. A husband loves his wife and vice versa, friends, brothers and sisters love one another. But this love is not called Bhakti-Yoga. This is worldly love which a worldly-minded man has cultivated for sense-pleasures, wealth, name and fame, etc. When this love is directed with pure zeal and fervour towards God-realization, it becomes Bhakti-Yoga. It is the concentration of the mind on God through intense pure love. The sincere love which makes the mind constantly live in the thought of God so that even a little break in it appears to be a great lapse, extending over a long period of time, is called Bhakti-Yoga. When castor oil is poured from one bottle into another, it forms a threadlike continuity; likewise does the mind of a devotee constantly live in Divine thought and Divine contemplation without break in Bhakti-Yoga. It is the unceasing search for God through pure love; the anxiety and the pangs of separation felt and the intense desire and effort to unite with God through selfless love. Bhakti means the natural settling down of the mind upon the highest Truth and the uninterrupted thought-flow towards It. It is the turning of all the activities of the senses into worship unto God. Love for love's sake is called Bhakti-Yoga. Pure love knows no fear, no hatred and no barter. A Bhakti-Yogi loves the Lord without the least fear and without the least desire for any personal gain. He thinks of Him as his nearest and dearest. As such, he and his love are free from the ego idea, and all selfishness. He gives but expects nothing in return. He loves the Lord without caring to know why he loves Him for. He does not care even for Moksha; he is keen on being with his Beloved constantly; love Him, commune with Him and worship Him. He is never worried about his own troubles and tribulations, miseries and worries. He does not grumble over his misfortunes. He thinks that whatever comes to his lot comes from his

Beloved. Hence, everything is sweet to him; for, he depends fully upon the Divine-Will.

Complete self-surrender is of the utmost importance in Bhakti-Yoga. In supreme Bhakti, all the powers of the mind get unified and integrated, and, as such, mind, will, intellect and ego work in harmony. What is left is pure love and love alone. When one attains this state of pure love, the body, the Nadis and the mind get purified automatically. Besides, for pure and sincere Bhakti, one has to lead a pure and holy life, follow strictly the code of ethics and observe perfect Brahmacharya in thought, word and deed. When one gains pure Bhakti, the Kundalini Shakti rises to higher centres and when It reaches the head–centre (Sahasrara) one gains Samadhi and Freedom. Thus, through Bhakti-Yoga also can one control the mind and attain Emancipation.

18

PITFALLS AND DANGERS

1. The vast majority of spiritual aspirants fail in choosing the right path and the right guide. Many sincere aspirants do not get a real *Sad–Guru* (teacher) and therefore lack proper guidance. Many get deceived by false propaganda, and in a hurry fall a prey to the machinations of pseudo–Yogis. Now–a–days, religion has also become a profession with many. If a monk has enough money at his disposal and if he can give shelter to some unscrupulous persons and provide them with free lodging and boarding, and if he can start a paper or magazine of his own to make his voice reach far and wide, he generally assumes the position of a great Sad--Guru. Not only that, he even claims to be an *Avatara* (Incarnation of God). Many Sadhakas (spiritual aspirants) succumb to these frauds. Some find out their mistake after sometime, and receive a rude shock, so much so, that they lose faith in all Gurus, in religion, in Scriptures and ultimately in God. Such people

make their life very miserable. Therefore, it behoves one not to choose a Guru all too hastily. On the other hand, one must study the Guru closely before accepting him and the Guru must also study the disciple. When both feel satisfied after mutual study, then and then alone should the connection be established and the outcome of such a connection is bound to be happy.

A real Guru is one who has reached the highest Samadhi (Nirvikalpa Samadhi) and in whom there is no trace of ignorance. He is kind, gentle, wise, a master of his mind and the senses, and indifferent to name or fame. He alone can put a disciple on the right path and guide him in his practices. Fortunate is the aspirant who gets such a Guru. But, when once a real Guru has been accepted the disciple must have infinite and implicit faith in him and in his power and wisdom and carry out his instructions to the letter.

2. Stick to one Guru, one Guru-Mantra and one Ishta-Devata. Do not change these three except on the advice of the Guru, and that too, as an exception and not as a rule. Have firm faith in them and carry on your Sadhana with patience and perseverance till

you attain the Highest. Otherwise you are sure to miss the goal.

3. A Sadhaka must observe very strictly the code of moral conduct. He must be always truthful, kind, gentle, unselfish and charitable. He should never tell a lie. He must observe strict Brahmacharya. If he is a married man he must lead a normal and well-regulated sexual life till he begets one or two children; but, after that, he must observe strict Brahmacharya if he really wants to control the mind and attain Peace and Bliss. To attain the Highest-Brahmacharya is the very first thing to look to; while loss of Brahmacharya is surely the greatest fall in spirituality. For, sex-energy is the very sap of the body and when checked, controlled and conserved it gets transformed into "*Ojas Shakti*" (great mental power). Without the accumulation of this great power ("*Ojas Shakti*") the mind can never be controlled nor can one sit down for meditation and concentration to attain Samadhi.

4. A Sadhaka must avoid hard labour both physical and mental, too much talk, over-eating, free mixing with people and moving in crowds or in evil company. Even a slight lapse in the

observance of anyone of these, will retard his growth. Hard physical and mental labour militates against meditation and mind-control. Too much talking makes the mind fickle. A man who over-eats as a slave of his palate can never control the mind and the senses. He will remain a slave of *Kama* (lust). Free mixing with all sorts of people is very injurious; for, during the Sadhana period when the mind is in the act of gaining purity, it is like a well washed white piece of cloth which takes any colour almost immediately. It will absorb quickly whatever the senses see and hear and, as such, innumerable thoughts, good and bad, will disturb him during the time of meditation. Moving in crowded places or in crowds causes disease and should, therefore, be avoided. Evil company ruins the character of a man and acts like poison and brings on spiritual death.

5. Often doubt arises in the mind of a Sadhaka, with regard to the validity of the Scriptures, or his Guru and his attainments or his own final achievements. A doubting mind can never reach the goal. It is better to have a bullet through the heart than to allow a doubt to arise in the mind. If it arises, drive it out. Use discrimination and free the mind of it.

6. Some Sadhakas carry on their Sadhana (spiritual practice) in a hapha'zard way; others in a lukewarm way. They cannot make much progress. The spiritual work must be regular and systematic. One must also be regular and systematic in work, worship and respite. Therefore, one must take up one's Sadhana right earnestly and sincerely.

7. Without good physical health no Sadhana is possible in the initial stages. Many Sadhakas assume great *Tyaga* (dispassion to the body and to the world) at the start. They display it unconsciously but ignore their body and health completely. The result is disastrous. Sometimes they fall a prey even to certain incurable diseases and remain sickly throughout life and miss the goal. Others fall ill by not observing the rules of Yoga strictly.

8. Very often Sadhakas lose hope and get dejected by small failures and little drawbacks and, as a result, leave off their Sadhana (spiritual work). This is very bad. Failures there will always be. These should goad one to still greater effort. Who has not failed and succeeded? One must sum up fresh courage and resume work with hope and redoubled effort. Only a hero can attain the Highest goal; not a weakling.

9. The most difficult thing to overcome by a Sadhaka is the innate desire for name and fame. To renounce even *Kamini* and *Kanchana* (lust and gold) is very difficult. But having done that one is so much entangled in the meshes of the desire for name and fame that one finds oneself helpless. A majority of spiritual aspirants are caught in this most subtle and dangerous net cast by *Maha Maya* (Illusive Power of God). A sincere Sadhaka; who wants to reach the Highest, must, therefore, conquer this all-powerful desire.

10. In their spiritual evolution, many aspirants see Divine Visions, perceive Divine Lights and hear Divine Sounds with the partial rising of the Kundalini Shakti. They do enjoy pretty deep concentration of the mind. But this is no permanent gain. These Visions indicate only the spiritual progress made and nothing else. But many weaklings make a big hubbub over these. They resort to false propaganda and begin taking disciples and collecting money for their Ashramas, etc. They thus deceive others, deceive themselves and ruin their own career and those of so many others.

11. After a little hard practice and with little steady progress, there comes the uncon-

scious desire to preach Dharma (what one has known) to others. This is a very dangerous game and should be avoided. If not, the habit will hinder one's growth. For, on hearing one's words of wisdom, many may praise one while others may even abuse. In the Sadhana period, praise or blame produce a very bad effect on the mind. Praise makes one egoistic unconsciously while censure disheartens one and produces a drooping heart. One stands to lose either way and wastes much of one's precious time. Instead, one should concentrate the mind in the work undertaken. One can do real and valuable service to the world by leading a pure, holy and ideal life. Example is always better than precept and an ounce of practice is worth tons of theory.

12. To extoll one's spiritual attainments and to narrate them to one's friends is a very bad habit. Narration of one's experiences retards one's spiritual growth and often leads to a fall, for praise or censure is sure to be bestowed thereby. In the spiritual realm, one's friends and relatives often become one's worst enemies. Thus one's spiritual experiences must always be kept a secret. These should be recounted to one's Guru alone for directions, if any; but

on no account should these be narrated to others. Otherwise, one loses what one has already gained and must struggle hard over again for it. This is no understatement. It is a warning which the author would like to sound as a result of actual tests with many Sadhakas.

13. One should never assume the role of a Guru before the attainment of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Even after making steady spiritual progress, if one begins to take disciples, one's spiritual growth will be stranded. In the first place, it is not at all an easy job. Secondly, in initiating a disciple, one has to give him a new life (*Dharma Kaya*) and a new spiritual life. In doing so, the Guru must take upon himself the sins of the disciple. If he is a man of Enlightenment he can easily wash away these sins by his supernatural powers. Thus, when an ordinary man assumes the role of a Guru, he sinks down and down and has to suffer from humiliation and incurable diseases. This is no exaggeration. To take up this role is a great allurement, indeed, to a spiritual aspirant. When rich and influential people, come and prostrate before him and beg for spiritual instructions and guidance the Sadhaka thinks that he has attained the ambition of his life

and, out of ignorance and pride, begins to initiate disciples and make Ashramas, etc. As a result he begins to suffer hell-fire instead of the real Peace and Bliss that he had sought for.

14. Another alluring practice which proves a stumbling block in the way of spiritual progress is the use of supernatural powers. It is very dangerous, indeed; for their use is nothing short of playing with one's own life. There are many instances in which Sadhakas displaying supernatural powers have completely ruined their lives and have had, in the end, to commit suicide as penalty. One gets these powers with the full rising of the Kundalini Shakti to the higher Chakras. Some possess minor Siddhis by birth also. A Sadhaka (spiritual aspirant) perishes spiritually if he gives himself up to the enjoyment of any one of the sense-pleasures. To possess Siddhis is to possess the power to command all the five sense-pleasures at will. Therein lies the difficulty in handling these Siddhis properly. Many fall an easy prey to name, fame, lust, riches, etc., and Siddhis are often used to gain these objects. When these are attained comes the reaction. During the period of reaction, these Sadhakas lose all these Siddhis, degenerate and degrade themselves and suffer humiliation and

make their lives miserable. Very often they find themselves unable to face this humiliation and commit suicide. One should, therefore, beware of Siddhis! They are not attainments but rather a hindrance in the way of attaining the Highest. A sincere aspirant, determined to reach the final Goal must hate and discard Siddhis as filth.

15. In the course of Sadhana the Sadhaka often experiences the partial rising of the Kundalini Shakti. Many Sadhakas and their Gurus do not understand what this portends. (This subject has been fully explained in author's book: "*The Primal Power in Man or The Kundalini Shakti*". Those who want fuller details should refer to that book.) This partial rising of the Kundalini Shakti, if not properly canalised and taken care of, takes the form of various diseases. During Its upward course when It reaches the brain-centre, one gets pretty deep concentration of the mind and may begin to shed tears out of emotion. Some begin to dance out of ecstasy. But this partial arisen Shakti cannot remain in the head-centre for long unless carefully handled and here lies the danger. When It falls down suddenly to the lowest centre—the Muladhara Chakra, the Sadhaka feels an abnormal

craving for sexual-enjoyment. And if he is not strong enough to resist the temptation, he falls an easy prey to lust and ruins his spiritual career. That is why the spiritual career of many a Sadhaka ends in debauchery for want of knowledge of the secrets of the rising of the Kundalini Shakti. A Sadhaka should, therefore, be very careful and watchful about this partial rising of the Kundalini Shakti. A little of sincere Sadhana will bring it on. When its symptoms appear, one must take to higher and stricter Sadhanas to raise the Kundalini Shakti fully to Sahasrara. That is the only way to safeguard oneself from pit-falls and dangers.

16. The spiritual practice must always be smooth and steady. Do not increase the time of your Jap, Tap, etc., untill and unless you feel pleasure in doing so and have confidence in your Sadhana. When you get up after finishing your Jap and Tap, you should never feel weak and wasted. On the contrary, you must feel infinite strength, peace and bliss in yourself. This is the test of real growth and progress. Never increase the time of your Jap and Tap beyond your power. Never strain your mind. But when you once increase this time you must stick to it with joy. If this be not possible, it should never be increased.

17. Another great danger that a Sadhaka has to face is reaction time. Come it must. To some, it comes often and lasts for a few hours or for one or two days. To some others it comes occasionally and in a most virulent form. During this reaction time, people often lose hope, get dejected, and leave off Sadhana. And there are cases where Sadhakas have committed suicide, for want of knowledge of this reaction time and the strength to withstand it. During the time of action one enjoys good mental and phyiscal health. Jap aud Tap become very pleasant and one feels that one's progress is quite fast and that the attainment of Samadhi or God-realization is only a matter of days. Then comes the reaction time all too suddenly. During this period one's mental and physical health is subnormal, environments appear unfavourable and Jap and Tap become insipid and an unknown sorrow overtakes one's mind. There is no apparent cause, yet one feels sorrowful and without solace. This is a very miserable state. A Sadhaka who keeps regular and systematic work can easily overcome this most dangerous period. The second best remedy to overcome it is light fasting (taking fruits and milk), prayer, Jap, meditation,

living in the company of one's Guru or Saints, and to read good and elevating books.

18. Very often Sadhakas make the mistake of living in secluded places for a long time in the initial stages of their Sadhana. For a novice a long seclusion is worst than life amidst sense objects. One enjoys seclusion during the time of action, but during reaction, one feels great dejection and as one cannot keep one's mind engaged in Jap, meditation, etc., for all the twenty-four hours, everything begins to look insipid and the suppressed and hidden feelings and lower propensities of one's mind gain intensity and one falls an easy prey to them and ruins one's whole career. One should therefore, avoid long seclusion in the initial stages. When one has made sufficient headway spiritually and has reached the stage where one can keep one's mind engaged in constant meditation at will, one can surely derive immense benefit from seclusion.

In conclusion, let it be said that a Sadhaka must always be cheerful. He must have infinite patience, perseverance, courage and hope. He should carry on his Sadhana inspite of failures. He must have full faith in himself, faith in God, faith in the Scriptures and faith in his

Guru. He must have a clear-cut path before him and an ardent hankering after true Wisdom and Emancipation. Besides, a Sadhaka must avoid extremes. He must always take the middle course and carry on his Sadhana till he attains the Highest. There should be no compromise in Sadhana. If due care is taken, he can surely attain the highest Samadhi.

19

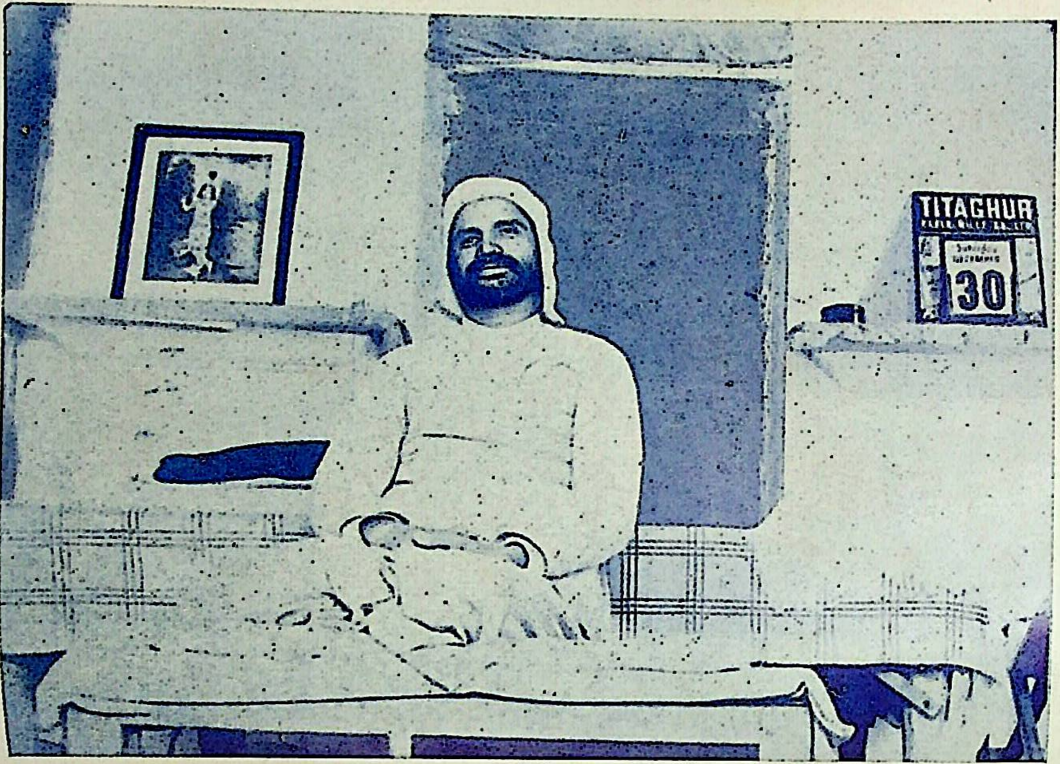
SAMADHI

As has been said in the earlier chapters, to attain Pratyahara and to practise it successfully require a lot of Sadhana (spiritual work). Only when a man is able to exercise control over his senses and the mind, and when he gains sufficient mental purity, does he attain Pratyahara and can practise it successfully. Pratyahara means attachment or detachment of the mind *at will* to or from an agreeable or a disagreeable thing and placing it at one particular place and holding it on to that particular place in either forgetfulness of the agreeable or the disagreeable thing. To secure it is not at all an easy job. It requires a lot of training and the exercise of great will-power. After establishing oneself in Pratyahara one should aspire after Dharana; that is to say, one should train one's mind further, and instead of fixing it at a place, he should now try to fix it at a point. And if one is able to fix one's mind at one point and hold it there for twelve seconds successfully

The Author : On the 2nd day of renunciation

SWAMI NARAYANANANDA

The Author : in his own Mood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at will, forgetting his body and his environments, one attains the state of Dharana. Such a man enjoys perfect good health and peace, and becomes a man of great character also. The next step is Dhyana. If concentration on one point is continued further and if one is able to hold one's mind at will for two minutes and twenty-four seconds at one point forgetting everything, even one's body and the world, one attains the state of Dhyana. Dhyana then leads to Samadhi. In Samadhi one must be able to concentrate the mind on one point and retain it fixed on that one point for twenty-eight minutes and forty-eight seconds. Samadhi is the final state, the culmination of Sadhana and of concentration.

Just imagine a sun billions of times bigger than our sun as the centre of a universe with its rays spreading in all directions, viz., East West, North, South, Upwards and Downwards and covering the entire space of that universe. Suppose further that these innumerable rays of the sun, starting from the centre reach the farthest ends of their journey and finding no more space to cover and their own powers almost exhausted stop all movement. These countless rays emanating from the sun do have their separate existence; but, through ignorance, they imagine themselves to be quite different from one another and from the sun. This seems to be an apt illustration to show the relationship between Paramatman and the Jivatmans. Here the sun may be compared to Brahman or God, and these countless rays of the sun to individual Souls (Jivas). These Jivas, through ignorance, forget their Real Source (Brahman or God) and imagine that they are quite different beings from one another and from God. Now, Samadhi is just the process of enabling a ray of light to trace back its course to its origin and merge it in the sun. In approaching the sun the ray of light realizes its folly and learns the truth that the only reality is the sun and that the multifarious rays that cover the entire space of the universe have no existence apart from the sun. So does a man attaining Samadhi, attains Brahman and dispels his ignorance. He gains Wisdom and sees Brahman and Brahman alone everywhere. In Samadhi alone can one gain the highest Wisdom. Therefore, to attain Wisdom and to gain Emancipation, one must attain the highest kind of Samadhi called Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

Samadhi is of two kinds: *Savikalpa* and *Nirvikalpa* (with form and without form). These two kinds of Samadhi are also called *Samprajnata* and *Asamprajnata*. Savikalpa Samadhi can be further subdivided into several classes according to the nature of the object used for gaining concentration. Whatever may be the nature of the object (it may be gross or subtle elements called *Tanmatras* or it may be one's Ishta-Devata) used for the purpose of meditation and concentration, the main characteristics of Savikalpa Samadhi is that it perpetuates duality in the mind, viz., the meditator apart from the object of meditation. In this Samadhi, one cannot and does not merge the mind completely in the Self. There is always present the idea of meditator and the object of meditation. In a man meditating on the form of his Ishta-Devata and constantly living in that one thought and form, the mind ultimately takes the form of that thought and, in due course, gets a vision of his Ishta-Devata. To begin with this vision is purely subjective. But, in the long run, after a very hard practice, it materialises and becomes objective. When this stage is reached, the devotee sees his Beloved with these bare eyes, and feels His presence. He can touch Him and can talk to Him as he can speak to his nearest and dearest friends. With all that, this vision cannot be strictly called an objective vision. For, an impure and ignorant man standing by the side of the devotee, cannot see God as He is seen by the pure minded devotee. Thus, such a vision cannot be strictly called subjective or objective. It is both and yet beyond both also. A devotee, in succeeding to have an objective vision of his Ishta-Devata whenever he wants, gains the culmination of Savikalpa Samadhi.

Whatever path one may adopt to get response spiritually and to attain Samadhi, the Kundalini Shakti (the central bodily Power) must rise up fully from Muladhara (the lowest centre) and reach the head-centre (Ajna-Chakra). So long as a man is satified with Savikalpa Samadhi, the Kundalini Shakti remains in the Ajna-Chakra and Its movement lies between Visuddha-Chakra and the Ajna-Chakra, but on no account can It get down below Visuddha-Chakra. By attaining Savikalpa Samadhi, a man attains something substantial permanently. To such a man, there is no fear of a fall. He remains a man of perfect character and is far superior to ordinary men. He will never succumb to any temptation nor to the weak and wicked propensities of the mind, such as lust, anger, greed, hatred, jealousy and the desire for name and fame, etc. He is established in Truth and fully knows the futility of things mundane. He lives in constant Divine ecstasy and his one desire and thought is to love, live in and move with his Beloved constantly. He is always content with the company of his Beloved Lord. Many Sadhakas in whom the feeling faculty predominates do not wish to go beyod this Samadhi. They are very pleased and quite satisfied with communion with their Beloved Lord when He appears to them in visions. In fact, they want to taste sugarcandy and do not wish to become sugarcandy themselves.

A man who attains the highest kind of Savikalpa Samadhi (objective vision of God *at will*) can easily attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi if he so desires. It is stated in the life of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa (Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa lived in the middle of 19th century, i.e., 1836-1886 A.D., and Swami Vivekananda, his foremost disciple, founded Sri Ramakrishna Mission in the name of his Guru) that he started his spiritual career as a priest of the Divine Mother Kali. Mother Kali was the Ishta-Devata of Sri Ramakrishna and he was properly initiated in the worship of the Mother. After working as a priest for sometime an ardent desire to have a vision of the Mother overtook him. In search of God-realization, Sri Ramakrishna forgot food, sleep and all bodily comforts and he fully devoted his time in worship, Jap and Tap (meditation). As time passed, this longing for and hankering after God-realization grew very intense. One day, Sri Ramakrishna sat in meditation for a very long time and prayed fervently to the Divine Mother for Her Darshan (vision); but inspite of all his sincere prayers, he had no response and, at last, life becoming unbearable to him without a vision of the Mother – he resolved to put an end to his life. Looking around him he saw a sword dangling in a corner of the shrine. Sri Ramakrishna got up suddenly and ran towards it. Before he could reach the corner and catch hold of the sword, he saw the image of Mother Kali emitting an effulgent and blinding light and then he had a vision of the Divine Mother, lost himself in Samadhi for hours together.

Even after getting this vision of the Divine Mother, Sri Ramakrishna was not satisfied. He was keen on having a vision of the Mother constantly *at will* and so he made his Sadhana (meditation) more intense and, at last succeeded in getting a vision of the Mother whenever he wanted. After attaining this highest kind of Savikalpa Samadhi, Sri Ramakrishna would see the Divine Mother and speak to Her as he would converse with his nearest and dearest friends. He stopped his Sadhana as he wished to go no further. One day, however, he was standing in the courtyard of the Kali temple at Dakshineswar, facing the bathing Ghat at the Ganges when he saw a boat come and stop at the Ghat. From the boat he saw a tall, stalwart naked monk alighting, and he was no other than Paramahamsa Tota Puriji. Paramahamsa Tota Puriji was immensely pleased to see young Ramakrishna, twenty-two years of age, and of very high spiritual attainments. He understood, from his clarified vision where the youngman stood and what further aids he required. He said to Sri Ramakrishna: "Why do you not try to go further ? You should take up the practice of Adwaita (Jnana-Marga) and attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi." But Sri Ramakrishna had completely resigned himself to the Divine Mother and he would not do anything without consulting Her. So, he replied Tota Puriji that he would ask the Mother and then let him know.

Paramahamsa Tota Puriji agreed. Sri Ramakrishna went to the Mother, prostrated himself before Her, and told Her all about Paramahamsa Tota Puriji and what he had said. The Divine Mother blessed him and said : "My son ! I have brought the man here for your sake and you can take initiation from him and start practising Jnana - Yoga (Adwaita)." Sri Ramakrishna then returned to Paramahamsa Tota Puriji who was standing in the temple courtyard waiting for him, and submitted himself for initiation and necessary training to attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi. A secluded room was selected for the purpose and at the fixed time Sri Ramakrishna was initiated. Paramahamsa Tota Puriji instructed Sri Ramakrishna to discriminate and to forget this phenomenal world, to discard all names and forms and to fix his mind on the Formless Aspect of Brahman. Sri Ramakrishna tried but failed. He could forget his body and the whole world but he could hardly forget the Divine Mother and go beyond Her Form. He informed Paramahamsa Tota Puriji of it. Tota Puriji got annoyed. He took up a piece of glass that was lying nearby and pierced Ramakrishna's forehead inbetween the eye--brows with it and commanded him to use all his mental energy to discriminate and to forget all names and forms including that of the Mother and to concentrate on the spot where the piece of glass had been fixed. Sri Ramakrishna did as he was bid, and this time he succeeded and within five minutes he attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi, i.e., his breath stopped and he sat motionless like a log of wood. Tota Puriji was not only pleased but greatly astonished also to see the motionless body of Sri Ramakrishna. He slowly but carefully examined the body and when he discovered all the symptoms of Nirvikalpa Samadhi he exclaimed: "My God! this is nothing short of a wonder! It took me forty years of intense Tapasya to attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi; but this youngman has attained it in five minutes!"

Even on attaining Savikalpa Samadhi, one has not attained the Highest. From Ajna Chakra the Kundalini Shakti must be taken to Sahasrara. It is only when It reaches Sahasrara and reunites with Shiva that the whole Creation dissolves and then there ensues Nirvikalpa Samadhi. For, in Creation, it is the Kundalini Shakti (the Creative Power of Brahman) that apparently divides, separates and evolves as mind and matter or as the five elements. Now, when this

Shakti ascends in Its return journey, It involves everything that It had evolved. In evolution It became grosser and grosser and in involution It becomes subtler and subtler and when It reaches the starting point and reunites with Shiva, It enters into Its causal state. This unity of Shiva and Shakti in their grossest form is the sexual unity (between the male and its female). In this function the positive and negative forces unite and the result is sexual-enjoyment and creation (progeny). But the unity of Shiva and Shakti in their causal state is the bliss of Samadhi which is attained without the senses and their objects and is much more soothing and satisfying than any known physical enjoyment. Only when the Kundalini Shakti reaches Sahasrara, can Nirvikalpa Samadhi ensue and never otherwise.

Nirvikalpa Samadhi is known by various names, viz., Asamprajnata Samadhi, Nirvana, Turiya-state, or Transcendental-state, etc. By whatever name we may call it, the experience and the Bliss felt by everyone of us is the same on attaining it. It is a unique state, beyond the grasp and reach of an ordinary man, however wise and intelligent he may be. It is experienced by a very very few fortunate people.

When the mind becomes pure and holy, and is divested of all desires, sins, impurities, attachments and aversions, and when the Kundalini Shakti entering the Sushumna Nadi fully, finally reaches the Sahasrara and unites with Shiva, one attains this supreme state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Every desire, good or bad, is only a want and every want is in duality. Hence, desires of all kinds are only a hindrance in the way of its attainment. To attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi, even the desire for Moksha must be discarded.

In the first stage of meditation, the ideas of subject, object and knowledge prevail. Name and subtle form always go together and are quite inseparable. The mind, ego, will, intellect and Chitta (mind-stuff) do not unite. They remain separate and conflicting with one another. But when the Sadhaka, after hard practice, attains the state of Dharana and Dhyana; mind, will, ego, intellect and the Chitta learn to unite and find great pleasure in that unity. When the concentration (Dharana) is carried on further all the scattered forces of the mind, will, intellect, Chitta, etc., integrate and unify and the entire energy of the mind gets directed towards and focused on one point. The gross forms and objects of meditation disappear and there remains only the subtle meaning which the focused force follows. Concentration now becomes deeper and subtler and the breathing becomes very smooth and slow. At this stage, one is able to have a sight of the subtle Sushumna Nadi, the spiritual heart and the Jivatman. This heart is not the physical one, it is on the right side of the chest. The place two inches above the heart-pit and a little below the right nipple is the seat of Jivatman (Self). We cannot give any size or form either to the spiritual heart or to the Jivatman. We can only perceive them in the form of an all-pervading Light starting from a point and spreading abruptly, as it were, within no time. This point is the seat of Jivatman (individual consciousness) and that of the spiritual heart. Some may doubt this statement. Just to convince them let us take an example. Electricity pervades the whole world and it is everywhere. Generally we do not see it as it is very subtle and formless. But, when it concentrates and works through the clouds striking one another, we see lightning and hear the roar of thunder. Likewise, is the formless Jivatman perceived in deep meditation in the spiritual heart. It is a mental vision. Only when the mind becomes pure, subtle and one-pointed can one have this vision.

When this subtle concentration deepens further and when the fully risen Kundalini Shakti reaches Visuddha or Ajna Chakra one can see an all-pervading silvery light (Divine Light). If this light is followed, it seems to emanate from a point. Now focus the mind with all force on that point. This point seems to recede further and further and the focused mind with all its energy follows the point, as it were. At this stage, many bend their bodies unconsciously and some even fall down from the sitting posture. As this falling hinders progress the Asana must be always firm. Focus the mind further, follow the point; now the mind, intellect, will, ego, and Chitta and the point of light all unite into one consciousness. At this stage, one gains an experience of one of these two kinds, i.e., either the body idea seems to melt away or it seems to become bigger and bigger and ultimately becomes one with the vast Infinity. When the body idea melts away and when the Kundalini Shakti reaches the head-centre (Sahasrara) and the mind, will, Chitta, ego, intellect and the light-point merge themselves in the individual consciousness, and the individual consciousness becomes finer and subtler and becomes one with the Supreme Consciousness, breathing along with the heartbeats stops completely without the least efforts or difficulty on one's part. In this state, what remains is the Ocean of Consciousness by Itself or in Itself. This state is known as Nirvikalpa Samadhi.

In the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, the ideas of subject, object and knowledge merge into one another completely. There is no body idea, no trace of the ego and the senses. The will and intellect stop their functions completely. The mind and Chitta (mind-stuff) merge in the Supreme Self. All bodily activities, internal and external stop. Even the heartbeats stop completely. The individual Self merges in the Supreme Self. This phenomenal world disappears. There is no idea of many– not even of one. For, where there is the idea of one, there is the idea of two and many also. These are relative terms, and, as such, one cannot stand without the other. In this state of Samadhi, the idea of bondage and freedom has no meaning. When there is only One Thing All-pervading (God or Brahman) and nothing else, who can bind and whom ? Freedom and bondage can have no meaning in that context.

The state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi is not a state of sleep. It is not a state of hallucination or dream. It is not a state of weakness and disease. It is not a state of swoon or death. It is none of these states. It is a state complete in itself. It is a full waking-state in deep-sleep, as it were. It is the state of conscious deep-sleep, and appears to be a paradox to ignorant men. But it is a bare fact. After attaining this state of Samadhi once, there is nothing more to gain, nothing more to acquire on earth or in heaven. For such a man there is no want, no longing and no deficiency of any kind. He enjoys complete satiety. Words fail to describe this state fully. For, it is beyond the conception of the mind and the intellect. Imagination, also fails to portray a picture of that Transcendental-state. It is not a sensible vision, nor is it an intellectual grasp or revelation; it is a state, a stage, a permanent attainment by Itself. It cannot be explained; it can only be experienced, felt and enjoyed.

The difference between sleep - state and Nirvikalpa Samadhi is this—In deep-sleep-state the mind, ego, will and intellect merge momentarily in the Self unconsciously and one is not aware of this fact. But in Samadhi, the mind, will, ego, intellect, Chitta and Jivatman merge themselves completely in the Brahman

(Supreme Spirit) consciously. There is no break in Consciousness. The ordinary consciousness proceeding further and further, becomes subtler and finer and finally becomes one with the Ocean of Consciousness by Itself. A fool falling sleep gets up as a fool. There is no change in him except that he is a little refreshed and rejuvenated. There is not much difference between a swoon and an intoxicated state. At death, only the gross body dies. The mind, subtle body and the vital forces are not destroyed. They follow the Self (Jivatman) with their subtle and causal forms. In waking and dream-state the gross and subtle bodies along with the gross and subtle senses and mind, function. In deep - sleep - state the causal body remains with the idea of senses and the mind, etc., in their causal forms. But in Nirvikalpa Samadhi none of these things function. Yet, one is not devoid of Consciousness (not the ordinary consciousness). The mind, intellect, will, ego, Chitta and Jivatman knowingly merge themselves in the Ocean of Consciousness in Samadhi. Then, in that state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, what remains is the Ocean of Consciousness by Itself or in Itself. In this state, names and forms have no place. It is not a place of light, neither is it a place of darkness. There the sun shines not, neither does the moon, nor the stars. There shines only the Supreme Spirit by Itself. All luminaries receive their life and light from the Supreme Spirit. In Samadhi, unlike deep-sleep or swoon, one takes the mind, intellect, etc., from point to point, step by step, and from grosser to subtler things consciously and finally merge them in the Ocean of Consciousness. Samadhi and deep-sleep-state are poles apart.

A person who attains Nirvikalpa Samadhi even once enjoys complete satisfaction and full Bliss. For him there is no worry and no anxiety of any kind as he lives constantly in Brahman. He sees his own True Nature everywhere and in all directions and he feels himself to be the All-pervading Brahman. Even an ignorant man attaining this state even once gains full Wisdom. After once gaining Nirvikalpa Samadhi, all desires and all thoughts vanish, all sins get dissolved and one is neither bound by duality, nor moved by the pairs of opposites. He gets absolved of all obligatory duties, goes beyond the idea of time, space and causation and beyond the three Gunas (Sattva, Rajas and Tamas). To gain this state of Samadhi, is the aim, the end, the goal and summum bonum of life.

An ordinary man attaining this most exalted state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi for once cannot come down to the plane of relative consciousness as he has no more Karma to perform. In attaining Samadhi he exhausts all Karmas and becomes pure and perfect. Such a man lives in the state of Samadhi for *twenty-one* days and leaves the body for ever. For, when a drop of water once enters the ocean how can it retain its individuality ? It is impossible. Likewise, an ordinary Jiva once entering and merging Itself in Brahman becomes one with Brahman. It is for this reason that one sect of the Vedanta-school holds that one can have real Wisdom and Nirvikalpa Samadhi only after death. Many do not grasp this point. But apart from these ordinary Jivas there are some great Souls, born perfect, such as Incarnations of God, Messiahs, Prophets, and other great Saints, who come to this world with a Divine Message to fulfill. And such people, even after attaining Nirvikalpa Samadhi come down in a most inscrutable way, especially by Divine Grace. They bring the Kundalini Shakti back to the region of the sixth centre (Ajna Chakra) or at the most to the region of the fifth centre (Visuddha Chakra) between which and the Sahasrara the Kundalini Shakti continues to work. These great men, in coming down from the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi to the plane of relative consciousness, retain the purified ego and work for the suffering humanity. They impart their Message and show the path of Moksha (Freedom). These people can enter into Samadhi whenever they like and come down also *at will.* The man who has entered and experienced Nirvikalpa Samadhi even once and comes down to the realm of relative consciousness, is not at all deluded by anything material or spiritual, human or Divine. For, he clearly perceives the Divine Hand and Divine Purpose behind life and death, virtue and vice, weal and woe, etc. Such a man has no difficulties, no troubles and no tribulations and he retains the perfect balance of mind under all circumstances. Man-made laws cannot bind him any more. The Scriptures lose their hold on him and they are of no more use to him. For, his very words become Scriptures and his very acts become *Smritis* (Scriptures dealing with the rules of conduct of a man from birth to death). The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman Itself. The knower of Reality becomes God Himself, as there is no residue of sin, ignorance and bondage in him; and what remains after Samadhi is Brahman and Brahman alone.

A person coming down from the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi does see the world and its multifarious objects, but in quite a different way. His whole angle of vision changes. He sees Brahman behind every name and form and the same Brahman as his own Self. No doubt, his body, senses, mind, will, ego and intellect function in a normal way; but the attachment to them is extinct. The mind is fully detached from the senses and their objects. The major portion of the mind always lives in Brahman. The vision of Brahman is never out of site even for a single second. He is conscious of his Real Nature always and under all circumstances. Such a man is called a *Jivan-Muktah* (the Living Free). Only a Jivan-Muktah can enjoy the *Turiya*-state. He surpasses waking, dream and *Sushupti* states. He now lives in *Turiya*-state all the twenty-four hours and in him only real intuition works.

Prarabdha-Karma And Jivan–Muktah: As has been said, the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman Itself. For, the mind is a very subtle thing and it has no form and no colour of its own. It takes the form and colour of the thought-object. And a Jivan-Muktah is one, who has attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi and has come down to the realm of relative consciousness. Even after coming down to the plane of relative consciousness, his mind constantly lives in the thought of Brahman. And, as such, it becomes Brahman. Besides, it is said in the Scriptures that a Brahma - Jnani (a Jivan-Muktah) has no body and even while doing actions he does nothing. Here the words should not be taken literally, as many seem to do. That will be a blunder. When the Scriptures say that a Brahma - Jnani has no body, it means that since a Brahma-Jnani or a Jivan-Muktah, always identifies himself with Brahman, he has no body or ego idea. He does not identify himself either with the body or with the senses and mind. When he uses the word 'I' he always means Atman or Brahman. So, it is said, that he has no body. Secondly, it is said of the Jivan-Muktah that even by doing all actions he does not do any. It means, that while doing actions a Jivan-Muktah does them without the least ego idea and without attachment and hankering after the fruits of his actions. While doing an act, he has no ego idea or no idea of 'I' and 'Mine', and no attachment and hankering after the fruits of the act done. Therefore, such an act produces no fruit. Further, the life of a Jivan-Muktah is like that of a burnt rope. The ashes of a burnt rope do possess the form of a rope but they cannot be used for binding. Thus, not a single act of his can bind a Jivan-Muktah. This does not mean that a Jivan-Muktah can do anything sinful or evil. It is impossible. A perfect dancer can never take a false step. Day and night never co-exist. So long as there is the least bit of sin in a man, he cannot have perfect purity of the mind and, as such, he cannot attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi. If we want to thread a small needle, the thread must be well-twisted and brought to a point, so that not a single fibre may project any way. Every projecting fibre is only a hindrance in the process. In like manner, to attain Nirvikalpa Samadhi, the mind must be thoroughly pure and sinless and without even a trace of desire. When all desires subside, and all sins are purged, can one attain Samadhi. Thus, one can never do any sinful acts after attaining Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Whatever such a man does, is for the good of others.

Prarabdha Karma may be a mixture of good and evil, virtue and vice, etc. Therefore, we cannot consider a Jivan-Muktah to be under the influence of Prarabdha Karma; as he would, then, be doing both good and sinful acts which is absurd. For, a Jivan-Muktah is a perfect man and perfection and imperfection can never go together. It is wrong to think like that. As an example, take a man who is suffering from a disease. The doctors attend the sick man and by proper medicines they succeed in curing the disease and declaring him in perfect, normal health. But, if some ignorant person declares that the man is still suffering from the same disease, what shall we think ? That either the version of the doctors, viz., "normal health" is incorrect or that the saying of the ignorant man that "the man still suffers" is wrong. Both cannot be correct at one and the same time. Likewise, when we say that a man is a Jivan-Muktah, it is understood, that he is an all round perfect man, a sinless man, one who has conquered his mind and gone beyond all dualities, one who lives constantly in the thought of Brahman and one who has his life in Brahman. How can we, then, ascribe Prarabdha-Karma to him ? How can we submit him to the influence of Prarabdha-Karma ? The very idea is absurd.

The vast majority of so called Brahma-Jnanis have not attained Nirvikalpa Samadhi. Nirvikalya Samadhi and real Brahma-Jnana always go together. They are inseparable. But many of the so called Jnanis are full of book knowledge without attaining the Highest realization. These book-learned people have a mere mental conception of Brahman and the Atman through reading books on Jnana. They take up and repeat certain formulas parrot-like, and they have very little practical knowledge of what they have learnt and repeat *ad nauseam.* Their conviction of the Ultimate Truth is very shallow and very often they suffer from fickle-mindedness and are the slaves of their mind and the senses. These Brahma-Jnanis or those who pose as Jivan-Muktahs, succumb to weak and wicked propensities of their minds and become an easy prey to lust, anger, greed, hatred, name, fame, money, etc., whenever they get a chance to indulge in them in secret. And these frauds in order just to deceive the public and to escape punishment ascribe Prarabdha-Karma to a Jivan-Muktah. To explain away every short-coming of theirs these people say: "Oh ! this is all due to my Prarabdha-Karma. Fate is inevitable. Whatever is in my fate must come and I must face it. But in doing all these acts, I am not in the least bound by them. I always live as the witness of the mind, senses and body, etc." This is nothing but self-deception.

How is the life of a Jivan-Muktah, then, to be accounted for ? Many may ask this question. It is said in the Scriptures that God Incarnates Himself by subduing His Maya (illusive power of God). But an ordinary man is made to take birth by Maya according to his Karma-Phala (fruits of past actions) and that, too, in spite of himself. How can God, without any past Karma-Phala, Incarnate ? How can God Incarnate and live in this world ? Is God-Incarnation a fact ? All Scriptures admit the Incarnation of God and so we must give full credit to it. If God can Incarnate and live in this world without any Prarabdha-Karma, then a Jivan-Muktah also can live without any Prarabdha-Karma. We have already explained that an ordinary Jiva in attaining Nirvikalpa Samadhi remains in that state of Samadhi for twenty-one days and then leaves the body dead for ever as it has no residue of Karma left for its working, and, as such there is no occasion for him to take birth again. And only great Souls such as Incarnations of God or God-sent men come down to the realm of relative consciousness after attaining Nirvikalpa Samadhi in order to fulfil the Divine Message. They do so in a most inscrutable way and by sheer Divine Grace. In coming down from the state of Samadhi these people have a new birth, as it were. Besides, a Jivan-Muktah is a Freeman, a Knower of Brahman, who lives in Brahman and whose being is in Brahman. It is, therefore, absurd to think of such a being living under the influence of Prarabdha Karma.

(Prarabdha-Karma means the effects of one's past life's desires, thoughts and acts, which are the causes of one's present life and its joys and sufferings.)

HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE MAN OF HIGHEST ATTAINMENTS: A Jivan-Muktah is always compassionate, forbearing, truthful, loving and same to all, benefactor of all beings, master of his mind and senses, desireless, pure and of perfect character, i. e., averse to displaying his attainments or wisdom, steady, meditative, ever-alert, a man of perfect balance of mind under weal or woe, and under all the pairs of opposites, a man of fortitude and a master of sixfold evils such as, hunger, thirst, grief, infatuation, decay and death, no hankering after name and fame, but one who honours others, and is friendly with those that are happy and merciful to those who are in trouble, and is ever established in Brahman. Besides, a Jivan-Muktah is always cheerful, content, calm and serene, perfectly unselfish and blessed with a winsome face, with clear and pure eyes, a steady gaze, and sweet voice. The atmosphere surrounding a Jivan-Muktah is always peaceful, and whenever an ordinary man with a perturbed mind visits him even without knowing his greatness, he automatically feels peace and calmness pervading all round and is attracted to the Saint. Whatever a Jivan-Muktah says or predicts, *that comes to pass*. While living, he works like a master without the least idea of "I" and "Mine" and without the least sort of attachment or expectation of the fruits of the acts done.

In the Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita Arjuna puts the following questions to Sri Krishna: "O Keshava, what is the description of a man of steady wisdom merged in Samadhi ? How does a man of steady wisdom (Jivan-Muktah) speak and how does he sit or walk ?" Lord Krishna answers the questions thus–"O Partha, (another name of Arjuna) when a man completely casts away all the desires of the mind and is satisfied in the Self alone by the Self, there is he said to be one of steady Wisdom. (This is the answer to the first question.) He, whose mind is not shaken by adversity, who does not hanker after happiness, who has become free from affection, fear and wrath, is indeed the *Muni* (man of meditation) of steady Wisdom. He, who is everywhere unattached, not pleased at receiving good, nor vexed at evil, his Wisdom is fixed (He does not praise or blame). (This is the answer to the second question).

When like the tortoise withdrawing its limbs, he completely withdraws his senses from their objects, then does his Wisdom become steady. (A man who has attained the Highest God-realisation or Nirvikalpa Samadhi, can, at any moment, shake himself clear of all impressions of the sense-world and go into Samadhi with the ease and naturalness of a tortoise drawing its limbs within itself.) As into the ocean, brimful and still, flow the waters, even so does the *Muni* into whom enter all desires, he, and not the desirer of desires attain to peace." (The ocean is not affected by the river waters flowing into it from all sides. Likewise, no reaction of desires is produced by the objects of enjoyment, which a Jivan-Muktah happens to come across during his sojourn on earth.) (This is the answer to the third question.)

The purest and the highest kind of intuition works only in a man who has attained the highest

Samadhi or in a Jivan-Muktah. In a Jivan-Muktah, the mind naturally lives in Turiya-state where one sees unity in diversity. In the purest and the highest kind of intuition there is no reasoning process at all. Intuition transcends reason but does not contradict it; on the other hand, it fulfils it (reason). Intellect takes a man to the door of intuition and then returns leaving him there. Through intuition comes the revelation of Truth. A man of intuition sees the ins and outs of everything face to face and so, nothing is hidden from his clarified vision.

Further, a Jivan-Muktah cannot be tempted by anything - such as, name, fame, money, sex-instincts, etc. He is always established in perfect Brahmacharya (celibacy in thought, word and deed). Even if he lives amidst the most beautiful and youthful company of the opposite sex, he lives without the least bit of any carnal appetites. He is always alike in pleasure and pain. Self-abiding and to him are alike a clod of earth, a piece of stone or a lump of gold. Ever firm and ever the same to agreeable and disagreeable things, the same to censure and praise, the same to friend and foe, and ever the same in honour and disgrace, he relinquishes all undertakings and firmly treads the path of Self-knowledge, and rise above the Gunas.

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THE GIST

If we minutely study all the activities of the multifarious living beings of the universe, we find that they all tend towards one object, which we may call Freedom, Happiness, Peace or Bliss. In a deeper sense, all these different words mean one and the same thing. Everyone detests pain, misery, bondage, disease and death. And yet, all of them suffer so much for having taken a wrong path and their activities having taken the perverted course. An ordinary man thinks that he would be happy if he amasses wealth, enjoys sense-pleasures and wins name and fame, etc. But do these things actually make him happy ? No, they do not. On the contrary, they make him all the more miserable. Instead of Freedom, they bring him bondage and instead of giving him Peace, Happiness and Bliss, they rob him of his peace of mind, and make him wretched. Where does this real Freedom then lie ? It lies in knowing one's own True Nature. To gain this knowledge one must control one's own mind. In order to control the mind, one has to exercise control over all the senses. For, it is the senses that drag the mind out and make it weak and impure. In order to exercise full control over all the senses, one has to lead a pure and holy life. This is absolutely necessary.

As an example, let us take the sun with its rays falling on a mirror. The mirror catches the image of the sun; further, it reflects the rays of light to fall upon a pond of water, very dirty and full of ripples. Though the reflection of the light of the sun from the mirror falls on the water surface, the latter fails to show the image of the sun. If the water were not so dirty and if the ripples on the surface, not so many, we could see the reflected image of the sun only dimly. But, if the water were clear and clean and without ripples, we could see the reflection quite clearly. Here the sun can be compared to Brahman or Paramatman or God, and the mirror to Atman (Individual Soul) and the water of the pond in its three states to the three kinds of the mind. The water that is very dirty and full of ripples is the Tamasic-mind, (mind which is very impure and dull), the semi-dirty water with light ripples is the Rajasic-mind (active, impure, and desire-sticken mind), and the crystal water without any ripples is the Sattvic-mind (the mind which is pure, subtle and one-pointed). (The minds of the beings can be divided into many groups, but, for the sake of convenience we divide them into three main groups). Though the reflected rays fall equally on all these three kinds of water-surface, we miss the image completely in the first case, we get only a glimpse of it in the second case while we perceive the reflected image clearly in the third case. Like the sun, Brahman or God is the real life behind every creature everywhere. The Soul is only a reflection of that Supreme Being and the mind receives its life and light from the Jivatman (Soul or Self) like the water-surface receiving the reflected rays from the mirror. If the mind is dirty (Tamasic-mind), it completely fails to catch the reflection of the Jivatman and such a being gets entangled in sense-enjoyments and, enamoured of sordid, mundane existence and, consequently, suffers hell-fire. A Rajasic-mind is an active mind with innumerable desires and ambitions. Such a mind understands the necessity of God and Dharma (righteousness), but still, it gets attached to the things of the world.

When in danger, or in fear of death, such a mind thinks of God, and, prays to him. But when one's mind is pure, subtle, calm and one-pointed like the still, crystal-pure surface of the water pond (Sattvic-mind), it catches the reflection, that is to say, it perceives the Atman and Brahman. Samadhi or God-realisation is the throwing back of the rays of light from the water-pond to the mirror and finally to the sun. To attain Samadhi, therefore, the mind must first be made pure, calm, and one-pointed, and then, it should be taken back to Jivatman which should finally be united with the Paramatman (Brahman or God.) This is what is meant by *Moksha* (Freedom). In this state alone lies real Peace, Happiness and Bliss.

Therefore, to control the mind, is an absolute necessity for all those who aspire after real Peace, Bliss and Emancipation. Even to an ordinary man, mind-control is very helpful. Ordinarily, there is no real joy and no misery without concentration of the mind. When a man likes a thing and gets enamoured of it, his mind constantly lives in the thought of that thing. Similarly, when a man hates a thing or wants to get rid of it, his mind lives constantly in the thought of that thing. In all emotional feelings, and sense-enjoyments, the mind gets concentrated automatically. Without the concentration of the mind, there can be no knowledge of anything. This automatic concentration of the mind is highly developed even in animals, birds and insects. But what is desirable is concentration of the mind *at will*. If a man learns how to control his mind and senses *at will*, he feels immense joy and becomes truly great. Without it, man is a mere slave of his mind and the senses. How very helpless he becomes under the influence of emotions like lust, anger, greed, hatred, sorrow, pride, jealousy, etc. ! What heinous things he does not do ! On the other hand, if a man learns how to control his mind and the senses, and becomes their perfect master, he can control every sort of emotion at every stage. Hence, mind-control is necessary for all.

The secret of success in every sphere of life and particularly in mind-control lies in a strong healthy body. A strong healthy body also means a strong healthy mind. We often come across intelligent people with a weak body. Such people have an intellectual grasp of things and can lecture on them but they are not practical. They cannot put into practice what they have heard and learnt. But there are some others who are strong in body and slow in understanding. By little effort if we give them an idea and make them understand it, they work it out to the end. The best period in one's life to learn mind-control is between fifteen and thirty years of age. Whatever habit one forms during this period, it survives to the very end of one's life. And if one desires to change old habits in later life, one must exert very hard indeed. Even then, it is very difficult to eradicate them fully. An ordinary man or woman is ruined by cultivating all sorts of evil habits in earlier life. So, a young man or woman who desires his own welfare must take care of his body and build up sound health. In order to gain this, one must have good environments, good mental and physical exercises in the form of good books; good company, indoor and outdoor games, pure air to breathe, pure water to drink and simple, nutritious food to eat. Along with physical development, one must have a clear cut path for work and should be strong ethically and morally. That means that one must cultivate and follow very closely the code of moral or ethical conduct, such as, purity, truthfulness, charity, unselfishness, celibacy, kindliness, etc. Without following the moral code of conduct strictly there can be no mind-control, and, consequently, no higher attainment. A moral wreck can never dream of attaining Emancipation. The purity of the mind comes from the observance of rules of moral conduct. And without purity of mind there can be no mind-control. Thus, it is that all the religions of the world have their foundation in the rules of moral or ethical conduct. As a matter of fact, all the religions of the world stress this need. All the founders of different religions have lived a simple, pure and virtuous life and they have also commanded their followers to do the same. By a strict observance of these precepts, the Great Saints of different faiths have solved the riddle of life and have attained Eternal Peace and Bliss. But, the people of the twentieth century along with their leaders lag behind in this respect and miss the aim of life.

Then, again, among the rules of ethical conduct celibacy plays an important part. Even to gain a normal happy life, a married man must lead a well-regulated sexual-life. If not his life generally ends in failure and misery. And, if one wants to control the mind fully, absolute celibacy is essential. For, lust is the vilest impurity of the mind. He who controls *Kama*

(lust) in thought, word and deed, and converts sex-energy into '*Ojas Shakti*' (great mental power), automatically performs threefourths of his Sadhana and is able to control the mind easily and to attain the Highest Samadhi. For, there is a very close connection between mind, sex-energy and *Prana* (Kundalini Shakti). By controlling any one of these three (mind, sex-energy and *Prana*) one automatically controls the other two also. So,the practice of mind-control,control of Prana and Brahmacharya (celibacy) must always go together, if one really wants to make progress. To observe Brahmacharya and to observe the rules of moral conduct one must take care of what one eats and drinks. Regulation of food and drink is abolutely necessary to carry on Sadhana (spiritual practice). Then comes the guidance of an expert Guru, and the choice of one's Ishta-Devata and Ishta-Mantra. Then follows regular and systematic work. Hap-hazard work leads nowhere. One must be sincere to the very core of one's heart and must stick to the Sadhana with infinite patience and perseverance. To carry on the Sadhana, one must try to sit in one particular Asana (posture). Without a steady posture one cannot think, meditate and concentrate the mind on one point for long.

So Asana is necessary. Sitting in a particular Asana, a novice must practise Pranayama and Mantra-Jap. Mantra-Jap and Pranayama help very much in making the mind, *Nadis* (nerves) and the body pure. In the initial stages one must sit for doing Jap and Pranayama four times a day, i.e., morning, midday, evening and midnight, if one wants speedy results. If this be not possible, one should sit in the morning and in the evening. To begin with, Mantra-Jap helps a novice immensely in the purification of his mind and Chitta (mind-stuff) and in removing the multifarious desires of his mind. Besides, Mantra-Jap is simple, easy and safe. Higher kinds of Pranayama should never be practised without the aid of an expert Guru (spiritual teacher) and without a strict observance of Brahmacharya, or else one may even go mad. The best and the easiest way in mind-control is to mix up work, worship, psychic-control and philosophy. To proceed with pure Pranayama alone is very difficult. In this process, many even miss the path. Apart from the sitting hours, the mind must be constantly engaged in Mantra-Jap of one's Ishta-Devata. The wandering mind must be constantly brought to the Hallowed Lotus Feet of one's Ishta-Devata.

This is the easiest way to gain *Pratyahara*. When a Sadhaka gains sufficient purity of mind and heart and is able to check and restrain the wandering tendency of his mind considerably, he gains the power of Pratyahara. Pratyahara means gathering and converging the mind *at will* at one particular place and to hold it there. After Pratyahara comes Dharana, in which the mind must be focused at a point and fixed there for at least twelve seconds. After Dharana comes Dhyana. If the mind gets concentrated and lives in one point for two minutes and twenty-four seconds, it becomes Dhyana. And if the same concentration develops further and if one can hold the mind in that same point for nearly half an hour, it becomes Samadhi. Samadhi is of two main kinds—with form and without form. The highest kind of Samadhi is without form and it is called Nirvikalpa Samadhi. It is only through the attainment of Nirvikalpa Samadhi that a man attains full Wisdom, real Peace, Bliss and Emancipation.

Dear reader, we have now come to the end of the last chapter of this book. Let us exhort you to take up your Sadhana right earnestly, and not to miss it even for a single day. If you are sincere and have patience and perseverance, success will attend your efforts. So, Arise ! Awake ! And stop not till the Goal is reached ! May He, out of His Infinite Love and Mercy guide you properly and give you real Peace, Bliss and Freedom. Adieu !

— *A Brief Life Sketch* —

HIS HOLINESS SRI SWAMI NARAYANANANDA, RISHIKESH—(HIMALAYAS)—INDIA.

His Holiness Sri Swami Narayanananda is one of the greatest Sages of modern India. He was born in a very respectable Coorg family (in South India) on Friday, the 12th April, 1902. As a child, he was very charming and became a cynosure of the village for various reasons. Firstly, he was handsome, robust and jovial with bewitching eyes and a smiling face. Secondly, the parents got this child after many years of penance, fastings, prayers and offerings unto the local gods and goddesses. The child had a great attachment for his parents, but, at the age of five, he had to be sent away for study. At the age of ten, he lost his father, which gave him a very rude shock. This incident was really the turning point of his life. He was an all-round student though restless and playful. He was a very good sportsman. He loved games for their own sake and used always to be one of the Ist. eleven of the high school teams that took part in various tournaments. With all his restlessness and love for games and sports, however, he used to spend half an hour seriously in Divine Contemplation regularly in the mornings and in the evenings. No doubt, he had not come across any monk or Guru (Spiritual Teacher) and he did not belong to any particular spiritual institution. As a matter of fact, he had none to guide him; but, he had an innate tendency towards a meditative life. As a result of this regular and systematic meditation, he had often enjoyed and experienced trance and deep concentration of the mind in his student career.

After finishing his studies, Swami Narayanananda did not go for a married life. Instead, he renounced the world at the age of twenty-seven and became a *Sannyasi* (monk). His renunciation was complete. In his '*Poorva - Ashrama*' (household life) he had all comforts. He had no troubles, no tribulations and no privations, what-so-ever. One day, before becoming a monk, he sat, as usual, for meditation and went into a deep concentration of the mind lasting for more than an hour. When his mind came down from the high pitch, his inner voice directed him to renounce the world and to become a *Sannyasi* (monk). He immediately decided to do so and distributed all his personal property to the last penny and left his hearth and home in 1929.

The Revered Swamiji, then, travelled thousands of miles in search of a Guru (Spiritual Teacher). After many hardships, he reached Calcutta, and went to Belur Math of Sri Ramakrishna Mission. On the first night at Belur Math, Swamiji had a dream-vision in which he saw Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa Deva sitting by his side and blessing him. He was tested for three days in various ways and by different monks before he was allowed to see the President-Mahapurushji Maharaj (A very Great Soul) who was one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa Deva. The President was then aged eighty. The Swami went to the President's room and prostrated before the Revered old Saint, and, in doing so, he completely surrendered everything unto him mentally. The Revered President blessed him and asked him his name as he was fully satisfied by the very sight of the disciple. Swami Narayanananda loved and venerated his Guruji from the core of his heart and so did the Guruji also love him intensely in return. He spent four years in the Ramakrishna Order and then felt a great thirst for God-Realization and a secluded life. But to get these in the Ramakrishna Mission was very difficult and there was no proper encouragement also. Besides this, some misunderstandings also arose, which led Swamiji to leave the Ramakrishna Mission in 1932 to go to the Himalayas for vigorous Tapasya (penance). And in the year 1936, after the Maha Samadhi (death) of his Revered Guruji, he cut off all connections with the Ramakrishna Order.

In the Himalayas the Swami underwent rigorous Tapasya. He worked very hard. Generally he had only two hours sleep, but often he did not go to sleep at all and used to keep meditating all night and day. Bodily comforts he had none and did not worry about. In the Sadhana period he used to perform one lakh of 'Mantra-Jap' daily and the minimum daily working hours (including Jap and meditation) were twelve and maximum sixteen. After very hard, regular and systematic Sadhana (Mantra-Jap, meditation, concentration and practice of Yoga) he came out successful and was blessed with *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*. It was the *Sivaratri* night (the festival in which Lord Siva is worshipped all the night long throughout India). in the last week of February, 1933.

Swamiji sat for meditation at mid-night, as usual. He felt the full rising of the Kundalini Shakti from Muladhara to Sahasrara. Along with that his mind soared to a very high pitch. His breathing stopped without any effort on his part, so also the heart-beats and the body idea melted away. He lost the ideas of subject, object and knowledge. His lower consciousness grew finer and subtler and, at last, became one with the Ocean of Consciousness by Itself and his mind along with will, ego, Chitta (mind-stuff) and intellect (Buddhi) was merged completely in Infinity. He remained in this state of Samadhi for long and then the mind came down slowly to the plane of relative consciousness. After this Samadhi his mind continued to remain in a very high pitch and he was unmindful of the world surrounding him. His angle of vision changed completely and he could see the one Ātman (Self) everywhere and in every object, that is to say, he could see Unity in diversity.

After having lived for over twenty-five years in seclusion, self-discipline, mind-control and, ultimately, having experienced the Supreme Reality, the Swamiji has decided to reveal his rare experiences in the form of books for the welfare of the suffering humanity. Ten of these books as given below have so far been published and there are many more yet to go to the press from his pen.

1. THE WAY TO PEACE, POWER AND LONG LIFE.
2. THE PRIMAL POWER IN MAN OR THE KUNDALINI SHAKTI,
3. THE IDEAL LIFE AND MOKSHA (FREEDOM).
4. REVELATION.
5. THE MYSTERIES OF MAN, MIND AND MIND-FUNCTIONS.
6. THE SECRETS OF MIND-CONTROL.
7. THE GIST OF RELIGIONS.
8. A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO SAMADHI.
9. MIND - ITS SOURCE & CULTURE.
10. THE SECRETS OF PRANA, PRANAYAMA & YOGA-ASANAS.

These books which have already reached different parts of the world are published by **Messrs: N. K. Prasad & Company, P. O. Rishikesh,** (U.P.)--HIMALAYAS–INDIA and deal with the most vital and intricate subjects dear to man. They reveal the mysteries of life, the tremendous hidden power in every individual—how to harness it and how to make use of it for real happiness, etc.,—character-building, the secrets of mind and its multifarious functions—ideal life and how to lead it, the secrets of different Yogas, Vedanta, etc., etc.

All the books are written in an easy-to-read style and have inspired and helped research-scholars, genuine spiritual aspirants and Yoga-students of the East and the West beyond their expectations. Many of these books have already been translated and published in foreign languages like German and Danish. Leading papers and magazines of the world have commended these books as rare and valuable. They are purely non-sectarian, absolutely practical and embrace all creeds and are meant for both the sexes.

Swamiji though aged fifty-nine now, looks much younger. Strangers take him to be a young man of thirty or thirty-two years. He has gained this youth through Brahmacharya (celibacy) and practice of Yoga. He wrote his first book (on Brahmacharya) many years ago. But, as he had no means (monks in India possess nothing and they live on alms) to get it published, it remained in its manuscript form till 1945. By chance, a certain gentleman saw the Mss. and convinced of its merits, he got it published the same year. Swamiji now started writing books, which literally flowed from his pen without the least effort on his part. But, he received no encouragement from any quarter. Instead, he was discouraged. Many hooligans took advantage of his piousness and created all sorts of troubles for him. They even brought charges of inhuman scandals against him. Often he had to suffer for want of a room to live in. After completing his first five books (mentioned-above) the Swamiji had no wherewithal to get them published. After the partition of India in 1947, four orphans who came from West Pakistan after losing their hearth and home chanced to come into contact with Swamiji. These young people had a look at the Mss. and convinced of their extraordinary merits, offered to publish them. The credit of bringing the "*Works of Revered Swami Narayanananda*" into limelight therefore, goes to the selfless, unflinching devotion and great sacrifice of these young people. We are pleased to mention the name of another devoted disciple of Swamiji in this connection —Shri G. L. Sethi, B. Sc., (Hons.), B. T. (Gold Medalist), A. C. P. (London). He is also a refugee from West Pakistan and has been an educationist of standing and reputation. As a labour of love, he has read the Mss. of all these books with great care and at considerable sacrifice to prepare them for the press.

Delhi. *Tilak Raj Khanna, B.A:*

A Short Life - Sketch of
THE REVERED AUTHOR–SWAMI NARAYANANANDA
AS PREDICTED BY
SHRI R. M. DATTA, *India Known Psycho-Palmist,*
DEHRA DUN (U. P.)
with the help of the science of palmistry on
April 14 – 1957.

Jupitor is the King of Planets and the most impressionable in that it lies within human power to develop it to any extent towards self-realization and this fact is eloquently borne out by the examination of the left and right Palms of His Holiness Sri Swami Narayananandaji. His left palm shows Venus and Sun in prominence and Jupitor normally developed. But in his right palm it is Jupitor that overshadows all other planets and supported by Sun it dominates to such an extent in Swamiji's 28th year of life that all worldly pleasures lose their hold on him and within a period of five years Swamiji is able to experience highest spiritual Bliss-but within him speaks the Inner-Self that he should kindle light in ignorant hearts steeped in the darkness of "*Maya*", reveal to them their real-selves which in truth embody the real Truth and mingle themselves into the Higher-Self as rivers gleefully lose themselves into the mighty ocean. The combination of Jupitor and Sun in Swamiji gives him the power of expression and Divine inspiration - which steal even steel hearts and rapidly they melt into love for this Messenger of God whose only mission in life is to lead the suffering humanity to the path of righteousness through self-discipline and mind-control and thereby experience the Supreme Reality within Itself (themselves). To continue with Swamiji's life – his greatness or to be more correct the greatness of his inner-self will shine with a glory of its own in his 57th year of life. And mankind will begin to benefit spiritually so much that this one Soul of souls will shed his lustre on one and all and bring into the fold of the Lord his prodigal sons by the magic of his soul-stirring Message of Love which in its broader form is an expression of the Divine. The Venus in Swamiji has been converted into great mental power and is the secret of his everlasting youth and that unforgetable love-inspiring LOOK in his eyes – a look which at once touches your heart cords, draws you nearer to the Great Soul, your worry vanishes and you feel at full harmony with the world that exists within you and without.

— *A Short Life-Sketch of* —

THE REVERED AUTHOR–SWAMI NARAYANANANDA AS PREDICTED BY

Sri Ramswaroop Suri, Honorary Director, Yoga Physical Culture Institute, Batala, (Punjab), with the help of the science of palmistry - on January 13, 1954.

1. The cross inbetween the lines of heart and head—the parallel lines at the mount of Jupitor—the great triangle formed with the lines of head and heart, with a base line from the line of life - all go to prove the peak of spiritualism.

2. The presence of circles in the fingers of Sun and Jupitor and on the thumb prove the association and friendship with very great men, of the order of Rajas and Maha-Rajas.

3. The starting of line of head from the line of life, is a clear proof about the strong will, determination and topmost qualities of head. Its leaning towards the mount of Luna and actually turning to the mount of Luna, is a clear proof that the person possesses a very bright quality of imagination, concentration and meditation. He is deeply interested in one particular science of a very high order.

4. The presence of parallel lines on the mount of Luna and second line of fortune prove

that his personality is a subject of fascination for other people and they are so fascinated that they do help him in kind and coin.

5. The long line of heart going to its own mount - Jupitor and ending in a fork is a clear symptom of his single - mindedness, gentle, meek and sympathetic nature. His heart is bold.

6. The presence of squares on the mount of Jupitor and the parallel lines; is a clear proof that he should lead the people in search of Truth. Had it not been for these parallel lines the person would have been a great leader in any other sphere - but their appearances (of these lines) prove that he is a very great leader in spiritualism.

7. The uprising of lines on the line of life is a clear proof that the person should shine in his life - say at the age of 52 - 56 - that period should be taken as the brightest period of his life, bringing him prosperity all - round.

8. The line of life is un-interrupted, healthy and long, so he enjoys a very good health and long life.

9. The line crossing the line of life before the middle part, is an indication that the person must have seen great troubles in earlier life, i.e., between the age of thirty and forty-eight.

THE MASTER AND HIS DISCIPLES

(We give below a few instances out of many of the experiences of the disciples.)

From my very childhood I had a religious bent of mind and had a firm determination to live in life-long celibacy. This idea I imbibed from my father, who had been a man of great character and to whom I had great love and regard.

I had visited many great men, but my conscience did not permit me to accept anyone as my spiritual guide. In the year 1948 at the age of twenty-two I used to live at Ramnagar near Rishikesh. One day, by chance, a Brahmachari who was our neighbour handed me a small book with the heading: "*The Way to Peace, Power and Long Life*" – by SWAMI NARAYANANANDA. I read the book carefully. The style was simple and lucid, the ideas very clear and original, the tone frank and bold. The book appealed to me very much and I felt too eager to have the Darshan (interview) of this great man. I asked the Brahmachari the whereabouts of this marvellous man and to my great joy learnt from him that the Rev. monk lived in seclusion very close to my place. On the next day, I with my brother and the

Brahmachari proceeded to the place of the Rev. Sage. Reaching the place, we found the Sage seated in his own mood. We paid our homage and had a long discussion. The serene face, the bright compassionate eyes, the child-like simplicity and the words of perfect wisdom completely captivated my heart and I mentally surrendered myself unto this Divine-man. We then prostrated and left the place. Sometime, after this incident I took initiation (*Mantra - Diksha*) from the Revered Saint. As directed I was carrying on my *Sadhana* (spiritual practices) regularly.

After a period of about two months, I had a severe attack of Malaria fever. I had very high fever. The temperature was running between 100° to 106° continuously for seven days. In spite of best efforts of the attending doctor, the temperature did not come down to normal. On the eighth day my case became very serious. The doctor attended upon me till midnight. I had become very weak. I could not swallow the medicine that was put into my mouth. Seeing all these worst symptoms, the doctor lost all hope and left me with a drooping heart, as he did not like to see me dying. With all that I had not lost my consciousness. I could understand the whisper of the doctor, the great concern and the great sorrows of my brothers and sister. When the doctor left me, my condition was going from bad to worse and thought that I was going to die soon. I summed up courage and resigned myself completely unto the Divine Will. I prayed whole heartedly unto God and to my Beloved Master. I prayed and begged them again and again to grant me Peace and Bliss and to take me to their bosom if I am fated to die.

At this critical time a miracle happened. My mind automatically began to repeat my Ishta - Mantra. I saw my Beloved Master by my side and blessing me. The effect was marvellous and I felt great peace and joy. In that state I forgot my bodily ailments, forgot my environments and became motionless and entered into trance (*Bhava Samadhi*) and remained in that state continuously for more than two hours. When I regained my normal consciousness I saw my family members weeping who mistook my long silence and thought that I was dying. I consoled them and asked them to go to sleep as it was already 2.30 a.m. I too had a very sound sleep and when I got up I was free from temperature and regained my normal health. Thus I owe my life unto the grace of mv Beloved Master.

K. K., Ramnagar, Rishikesh.

* * *

I had determined to lead a life of celibacy throughout. I came in contact with the Rev. Master at the age of sixteen in the year 1949. As directed by my Guru Dev, I began practising Mantra - Jap and meditation. After some days, when I was meditating I had a vision of a black huge man who threatened to kill me. I was horrified and with all sincerity prayed to my Guru Dev to save me. And to my great relief I got the vision of my Guru Dev, and the huge black figure disappeared. Since that incident my faith, love and regard in my Beloved Master increased immensely. A few days after this incident, one day while I was meditating, I felt a strong current rising upward from the anus-centre (*Muladhara Chakra*). As I was mentally watching this current, I saw a black serpent-like thing rising upward from the Muladhara Chakra along the Sushumna canal. When this serpent crossed the region of heart (*Anahata Chakra*) I had the vision of gods and goddesses, the vision of my Guru Dev and lastly my Ishta - Devata.

When this serpent reached the head centre, all the visions disappeared and I lost my body consciousness and the environments and my mind merged in Infinity. After this experience when I regained bodily consciousness, I experienced unspeakable peace and bliss all-through. I had the fortune of gaining this rare boon within a short time of three or four months by the infinite kind grace of my Beloved Master.

S. K., Rishikesh.

◆

In the year 1949 there had been so much unrest and misfortune in our family. My younger brother a graduate and an employee in one of the Government offices at Delhi fell sick suddenly. We consulted the doctors and they found no disease, but my brother behaved abnormally. My father being a staunch Arya Samajist had no faith in spirits, etc. When medical aid completely failed, as a last resource we approached a sorcerer and told him about my brother. He gave us a few cardamoms after uttering certain *Mantras* (mystic syllable) and asked us to give them to the patient and if there is any sorcery the patient would speak after eating them. As directed by the sorcerer, we gave the cardamoms to my brother and as usual we attended upon him. At about twelve midnight, my brother began speaking. I called him by his name and asked what was wrong with him. Then he said that he was not my brother but a spirit, and he had been sent by one of our relatives, a witch, to take vengeance upon us. He narrated so many facts and figures which convinced us all (whole family members). Then, the following questions and answers took place between the spirit and myself:—

Myself — I do not find peace of mind. I am very greatly disturbed. Please let me know how I can get it ?

Spirit—Why ? You have been most fortunate in having a *Purna-Guru* (Perfect Master) and you can have it from him. (My brother and others had no clue of my connection with my Master and his whereabouts were kept in secret by me).

Myself—Where does my Guru Dev live ?

Spirit—He lives at Swargashram on the second floor of a house, near the river Ganges.

Myself—What is he doing now ?

Spirit—He is now in Samadhi.

Myself—What about his spiritual growth ?

Spirit—He is in a very dizzy height of

spiritualism and wisdom. He shines like the midday sun surpassing everyone.

Myself—you extoll him so much but he is not known to the world.

Spirit—He shuns name and fame and thus lives hidden. With all that he will come to lime-light soon.

Myself—Who all visit him ? The Spirit gave the names in detail of all those people who are in touch with the Master and their spiritual evolution, etc., which gave me entire satisfaction. After this incident my faith, love and regard in my Master intensified and I surrendered completely unto him. So also my entire family members. *T. R., Delhi.*

* * *

Prayag is the place where the sacred rivers Ganga and Yamuna meet and it is at Allahabad. Every orthodox Hindu considers it a rare privilege to have a dip bath at Prayag. On every twelfth year a purna Kumba Mela (auspicious bath) takes place and millions of monks and householders flock there from the different parts of the country to have their dip bath. 1954 was also a Purna Kumba Mela year. I am a railway employee and before leaving Delhi, I had written to my Master about my intended pilgrimage to Prayag and begged him for his blessings. Just a day before starting, I had received his letter of blessing.

I left Delhi with my mother and wife and reached Prayag on 2. 2. 54. The second day (3. 2. 54.) was a new moon - day and six to seven million of people had gathered there to take bath. Early in the morning we three proceeded towards the bathing place amidst a huge crowd. From all the three sides people were rushing towards the bathing ghat and a procession of the monks (the monks are given the privilege of taking bath first and then the householders) was going back after bath from the bathing place and the police stopped the crowd suddenly from the side of the bathing place and whereas there had been no arrangement to stop people coming from behind (from all the three sides).

As a result of this mad rush, the people who were caught in the middle were crushed as it were. More than thousand people (men, women and children) died and several thousands fainted, fell down and received minor and major injuries. Any man once falling down means to lose his life. For, such a man will be trampled under foot and he cannot rise up.

As we three were amidst the crowd, we got suffocated and fell down semiconscious. People trampled over us and soon we were almost buried under dead and fainted people. We were in a most miserable state quite helpless and had no strength either to move or to get up and thought that our end had come. We were in this condition for about half an hour. At this critical time I remembered my Revered Master and prayed to Him with a travail heart to save us. I prayed again and again. Low ! to my great wonder a miracle happened. The crowd suddenly thinned. The fainted people lying over us got up one by one and we too got up without any one helping us and also without any injury, loss of things, quite rejuvenated as if from a deep sleep. We then proceeded to the river and took our bath. This incident gave me the idea of the greatness of my Revered Master and my love, regard and faith increased into million folds. I really take it a very rare privilege for having taken shelter at the Hallowed Lotus Feet of such a great Personage.

I. G., Delhi.

MASTER PIECES ON YOGA, VEDANTA, MIND-CONTROL & BRAHMACHARYA

By: Swami Narayanananda, *Rishikesh*–HIMALAYAS-INDIA

The following books are original works being the products of a Master-Mind. These wonderful books solve the riddle of life here and hereafter and help you in leading a Pure, Full, Happy and Healthy life.

These books throw full light on a variety of subjects and they have reached to different parts of the world and have helped great research scholars, Yoga-students and spiritual aspirants of the East and the West beyond their expectation. Leading papers and magazines have paid glorious tributes to all these books. The books are purely non-sectarian, absolutely practical and they embrace all creeds and both the sexes.

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“THE WAY TO PEACE POWER & LONG LIFE”
का
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पृष्ठ सं० : १७२ — साइज़ : क्राउन १६ — मूल्य २.५०

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पृष्ठ सं० : १७६ : — साइज़ : क्राउन १६ — मूल्य २.५०

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